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THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
EBENEZER ELLIOTT

THE POETICAL WORKS OF
EBENEZER ELLIOTT

EDITED BY HIS SON
EDWIN ELLIOTT

Rector of St. John's, Antigua

A NEW AND REVISED EDITION

TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

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ON THE STATUE OF EBENEZER ELLIOTT
BY NEVILLE BURNARD, ORDERED BY
THE WORKING MEN OF SHEFFIELD.*

By WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

GLORY to those who give it ! who erect
The bronze and marble, not where frothy tongue
Or bloody hand points out—no, but where God
Ordains the humble to walk forth before
The humble, and mount higher than the high.
Wisely, O Sheffield, wisely hast thou done
To place thy ELLIOTT on the plinth of fame ;
Wisely hast chosen for that solemn deed
One like himself, born where no mother's love
Wrapt purple round him, nor rang golden bell,
Pendant from Libyan coral, in his ear,
To catch a smile or calm a petulance ;
Nor tickled downy scalp with Belgic lace ;
But whom strong genius took from poverty,
And said, *Rise, mother, and behold thy child !*
She rose, and Pride rose with her but was mute.
Three ELLIOTTS there have been, three glorious
men,
Each in his generation. One was doom'd
By despotism and prelacy to pine

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In the damp dungeon, and to die for Law,
Rack'd by slow tortures ere he reacht the grave.*
A second hurled his thunderbolt and flame
When Gaul and Spaniard moor'd their pinnaces,
Screaming defiance at Gibraltar's frown,
Until one moment more, and other screams,
And other writhings rose above the wave
From sails afire and hissing where they fell,
And men half burnt along the buoyant mast.
A third came calmly on and askt the rich
To give laborious hunger daily bread,
As they in childhood had been taught to pray
By God's own Son, and sometimes have prayed since.
God heard; but they heard not. God sent down
bread ;
They took it, kept it all, and cried for more,
Hollowing both hands to catch and clutch the crumbs.

I may not live to hear another voice,
ELLIOTT, of power to penetrate as thine,
Dense multitudes ; another none may see,
Leading the muses from unthrifty shades,
To fields where corn gladdens the heart of man,
And where the trumpet with defiant blast
Blows in the face of war and yields to peace.
Therefor take thou these leaves, fresh, firm, tho'
scant,—

To crown the City that crowns thee her son.
She must decay : Toledo hath decay'd ;
Ebro hath half forgotten what bright arms
Flasht on his waters ; what high dames adorn'd

* See Forster's " Statesmen of the Commonwealth."

The baldric ; what torn flags o'erhung the aile ;
What parting gift the ransom'd knight exchanged.
But louder than the anvil rings the lyre ;
And thine hath raised another City's wall
In solid strength to a proud eminence,
Which neither conqueror, crushing braver men,
Nor time, o'ercoming conquerer, can destroy.
So now, ennobled by thy birth, to thee
She lifts with pious love the thoughtful stone.
Genius is tired in search of gratitude ;
Here they have met ; may neither say farewell.

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JUVENILE POEMS.

EXTRACT FROM "THE VERNAL WALK," WRITTEN IN THE
AUTHOR'S SEVENTEENTH YEAR.

OH, Thou that sway'st the boundless universe !
King of illimitable empire ! hear
My trembling voice of praise. I know Thou art ;
But when my soul would raise her eyes to Thee,
Vainly I try to grasp so vast a view ;
For in thy half-reveal'd sublimity,
Holding the reins of universal rule,
Thou sitt'st invisible upon the throne
Of universal nature, and behold'st
A vast immensity, fill'd by Thyself.
Spirit of spirits ! ere the eagle flew,
Ere the worm crawl'd, ere sang the love-taught wren,
Or man, erect, before Thee stood and smiled,
Thou hadst existed an eternity
Of thoughtful ages : ere there lived one soul
To worship thee, oh, God of Holiness !
Wrapt in incomprehensibility,
Pleased with self-contemplation, Thou didst muse
In silence on thine own eternal thoughts.

Through all extent Thou piercest ; nothing is
Where Thou art not ; even in me Thou dwell'st.
Thou mov'st the strings of mental melody
Which tune my soul to harmony and love.
Thou bid'st my fancy soar to realms of light,
Bid'st reason—holy reason—muse on Thee
And in thy works behold Thee, throned o'er heights
And depths of glory inaccessible.
I, in the majesty of nature, see
The greatness of eternal Majesty ;
I, in her smiling scenery, behold
The bounteous smile of beauty infinite.
Thy goodness is unbounded, God of Love !
Here—or wherever Uncreated Light
Flames of the sea of ever-vital beams
World-peopled, as this vernal air with birds—
Father and God ! thy sons shall worship Thee !



MIRANION.



WHY shouts Quebec? Why rolls from all her towers
 The peal of gladness, through the midnight air,
 O'er moving crowds? Why do her casements blaze,
 Her torches flash, in lines of restless light?
 Great Montcalm is return'd with victory,
 And moves in triumph through her blazing streets.
 Before him glide Canadian maids, white-robed—
 War-widow'd virgins, on whose pensive cheeks
 The blush of health had faded into snow.
 Life, life, how heav'nly graceful are thy forms,
 In joy or sorrow! Soft as sleep they move,
 High-waving o'er their heads the spotless lawn,
 And scattering roses at his proud steed's feet.
 Quebec pours forth her people, young and old,
 To see again her great deliverer.
 The war-unchilded mother, and the boy
 Whose sire had fall'n in battle, came abroad;
 Even the friendless, aged, houseless man
 Cast on his ruin'd dwelling, as he pass'd,
 But one brief glance, then, dancing with the young,
 Follow'd the glad procession and rejoiced.
 The soldier's widow sought the crowded streets;

Oh, deem not that her true heart could forget
Her low-laid husband ! No ! with mournful smiles
She thought of him and wept ; but while she view'd
The glittering scene, those sad smiles seem'd to say,
“ And he, too, was a soldier.” Did not, then,
Love-lorn Miranion of the down-cast eye
Steal to the lattice of her tower to gaze ?
She (stately nun ! angelic exile ! torn
From nature's bosom !) on the various throng
Look'd pale and anxious. Soon again she saw,
Herself unseen, yet mute and timidly,
Though with energetic pensiveness, the lord
Of her affections, Montcalm. Loftier seem'd
His martial beauty, darker his large eye,
With triumph fired ; and god-like headvanced,
To redivorce her vows. Unhappy maid !
Why was she born ? All-ignorant is he
What cause he hath to feel ennobling pride—
Miranion loves him ! but he knows it not.
He reins his foamy steed ; the mighty crowd
Halts, and is hush'd, and living statues hold
Unnumber'd torches still ! She sees no torch,
She sees no crowd, her eyes are fix'd on him.
He waves his hand, he bows in act to speak ;
Forward she bends ; she listens motionless ;
Hangs on his lips, and breathless drinks his speech,
As if the words that should pronounce her death,
Quiver'd for awful utterance on his tongue.

“ France is victorious ; Ever fortunate !
She, mistress of the nations, shall extend
The limits of her sway. Columbia spreads
The verdure of unbounded wilds, and rolls
Her rivers rivalless, to load with wealth
Our noble country ; and the vanquish’d seas
Shall bound her greatness with their amplitude ;
For England, like a wintry sun, descends,
Nor shall the sloping orb, return’d, arise
Again to glory. Laud the Lord of Hosts !
The maple, and the monarch of the woods,
Magnolia, now in praise lift up their hands,
To measureless Missouri’s serpent folds.
I see the unborn glory of this land—
Her sons, high-destined, her immortal men,
The stately children of futurity.
Laud, then, the God of Battles, my loved friends !
Calamity hath worn you, war hath sown
Your streets with woe ; but better days approach.
Go to your homes, and to your little ones
Say—Ruin hath stalk’d near us, with a frown
That awed, but blasted not—the storm is past.”

So said he, hapless in his prophecy,
And, from the throng retiring, sought repose.
Then, as a catacomb’s vast silence, soon
The living scene was hush’d ; a silent crowd,
A peopled solitude—the city slept.

Time ever moves, the only traveller
That tires not, rests not ; dilatory man
May loiter and may pause ; Time pauses not.
How fast his wings have swept away the hours !
And lo ! 'tis come ! The important hour is come
That shall make children fatherless, and dash
Into despair the confident hope of pride !
Thou, Quebec, sleepest ! and thy warrior sons,
In visions, see the host of England worn
With famine, and subdued without a blow.
But that unconquer'd host abjures repose,
Crowds every boat, and glides, inaudibly,
Down the dark river. Wake, proud city, crest
Thy rocks with thunder, while they yet are thine !

Night hears the bat and owlet flit and swim
Over funereal forests, all asleep ;
And mighty rivers, and lakes ocean-like—
That gaudily deck th' eternal wilderness,
And round the virgin waist of solitude,
Enamour'd, twine their long and beauteous arms—
Slumber beneath innumerable stars.
The snow-white porpoise, rising, starts to hear
The prow-divided wave. How sweet, O night,
Thy chaste and unperturb'd sublimity !
Yet, on the shaded river, many a heart
Aches, as the British boats, with muffled oars,
Glide with the stream. Of England's happy fields

Thinks the doom'd soldier, mute—of friends and
home—

Of love and quiet—and the parting look,
Engraven on his heart—of weeping wife—

Oh ! never more around his neck to clasp
Her arms, or lift his babes to kiss their sire.

Amid the silent faces, there is one
Most thoughtful. O'er the stern he leans in thought,
Where, thro' the glimmering waves, gleams many a
face

Of slaughtered warrior, peaceful in his tomb
Of waters ; for, tho' heaven's bright queen towers not
Above the mountains ; yet, the clouds which wreath
Their highest cliffs, tinged with her mildest beams,
Are visible in magic forms of shade
And brightness ; and their edges, silver-fringed,
Tremble, reflected on the glassy stream.

The shrouded heavens, the solemn hour, the vast
River, the rocks enormous, plumed with pinés,
That cast their calm shades o'er the gliding wave,
Bend to stern sadness Wolfe's o'er-wearied mind.
Ah ! soon the battle-crash shall wake their shades,
And bid their echoes howl ; hurl o'er their rocks
The slayer and the slain, and dye with gore
This silent, solemn, loneliest, loveliest scene !

The rocks frown'd darker o'er the shoreward fleet.
First on the strand stood Wolfe. Boat followed boat,

And warrior warrior. With uplifted sword
He pointed to the rocks ; and swift, and strong,
And resolute, they scaled the steepness there.
Silent, and each assisting each, they rose
From tree to tree, from cliff to cliff ; and soon,
High on the summit, twenty veterans waved
Their Highland blades. Mute thousands follow'd
 them,
With labour infinite, and cautious tread,
And breathing, half-suppress'd ; and painfully
Their slaught'ring cannon weigh'd from pine to pine.

Still dost thou sleep, proud city, unalarm'd !
Hush'd are thy streets ; and by the warrior's bed
The sword is idle ; and of peace restored
The matron dreaming, sees her sons unscrew
The rifle, and release the useless helm.
But pale Miranion wakes. She, love-lorn maid,
Hath stolen to the heights, unseen, unheard,
Alone, to hear the river, far below,
Murmur unseen ; and to indulge fond thoughts,
Sweet wishes, fond and vain. O'er the grey rock
She bends her drooping beauty, and she thinks
How sweetly, pillow'd on his bronzed breast,
The peasant's wife is sleeping from her toils ;
How well it were to be a soldier's bride,
And couch with love and danger ! Holy maid !
What if thou doff thy veil, in man's attire

To stand by Montcalm's side, a seemly page?
But virgin fear, and virgin modesty,
Chased that wild thought at once; a painful heat
Rush'd to the cheek, which never erst the blush
Of guilty shame suffused; and "Oh!" she said,
"My God, forgive me! O forgive thy child!
Support me! strengthen me! or let cold earth
Wrap poor Miranion's bosom, and the tears
Of pious sisters mourn a sinless maid!"

Her eyes are red with weeping; on her hand
Her moisten'd cheek reclines; silent she looks
On the dark river. "Do those shadows move?"
She rises, listens. "What strange sounds are these?"
The hum continues, deepens—hark, a step!
Men—soldiers—what are they? The foe! the foe!"

The gloom
Deepen'd, the silence deepen'd.
She trembles, and her eyes are closed with fear.
What shall she do? Obey affection's voice,
And duty's mandate? And, with terror's haste,
She hurried to the camp of sleeping France.

Meantime, o'erwearied Montcalm, on his couch
Extended, sought not sleep, nor had he doff'd
His garments. But the toil of thought intense,
At length o'erpower'd, confused him. Slumbering,
He toss'd from side to side, and sent abroad

The wildly-wandering soul—a reinless steed ;
Nor slept, nor waked ! Upstarted stiff his locks,
By terror smitten ; his bones shook. Motionless,
In gloom and might, before his troubled soul,
A power embodied stood, unspeakable
And hueless. “Sleep’st thou, Montcalm ?” said a
voice,
“Still, vanquish’d victor, sleep ! Why wake to shame ?
Sleep ! Wolfe hath torn the laurel from thy brow.”

Thus spake the evil dream. Still slumber’d he,
Unhappy ; and a mute, expressive tear
Stole from his eyelids o’er his swarthy cheek,
When, pale, approach’d unseen, with noiseless step,
Miranion. Fear and love had bleach’d her cheek ;
And with mute, trembling, inexpressible
Emotion she beheld the man beloved !
She heard him sigh—nearer she drew—she stoop’d,
“He weeps,” she cried ; “Ah, wherefore in his
sleep ?”

She look’d—she paused ; at length, with timid hand,
She touched the hero’s forehead, and she said,
“Rise, Montcalm !” Up, at once, the warrior sprang,
Confused, astonish’d, and, ere well awake,
His hand had half-undrawn the ready sword ;
Then on the maid he gazed, with such a look
Of doubt and fierce surprise, as drove the blood
Back from her fading lip oppressively.

“ Who—whence ? ” he cried, retiring ; and he raised,
With outstretch’d arm, the falchion now unsheath’d.
His voice so stern (love was not in the tone)
Came on her heart like death ; and, faltering,
At length she cried, “ A friend to France I come !
Wolfe climbs the heights of Abraham, and seeks
The city.” Fix’d in awe, she stood unmoved ;
The growing light was fearful in her eye :
He gazed upon her, never had he seen
Her face before, never a face so fair—
So mild, so sad, so innocent ! She seem’d
The gentle angel of the dead, ordain’d
To bear the virgin-spirit to its home
Eternal ; and if beauty could have moved
His stern, ambitious heart, sure he had loved
That heavenly pensiveness. He stood—he look’d—
He answer’d not ; he turn’d in thought away.
Slow grew the light, the darkness dimly waned,
And on the mountains walk’d the dawn thro’ flowers,
When Montcalm’s eye shrank, dark from what it
fear’d—

The banner’d cross, high on the vanquish’d heights,
O’er bright steel waving red, and England’s host,
Embattled, like a crimson fortress vast,
Cresting the eminence with hostile arms.

Why bends Miranion o’er a soldier’s couch ?
To kiss the pillow of her warrior love.

Her heart is fill'd with joy, which, soon to fade,
Painteth her pale cheek with a cherub's glow ;
And for a moment she forgets herself.
Rise, tall Miranion of the pensive smile !
Rise, stately vestal, from thy warrior's couch !
Soon shalt thou tremble o'er thy counted beads,
And, faltering, listen in thine earnest prayer,
Telling to heaven, to heaven alone, thy love ;
And vainly calling every saint to save.
He is not fallen yet ! But e'er that sun
Shall set and rise, one kiss, thy first and last,
On Montcalm's lip thy breaking heart shall print ;
Nor shall the unfeeling taunt of prudery
Flush poor Miranion's faded cheek with shame.
" My hero ! " shalt thou say, " for ever mine !
My soul in this chill kiss hath wedded thee."
Then shalt thou grasp his hand fast, with a look
That almost might awake the illustrious dead.
But ere grief close thine eyes for ever, one
Proud spectacle, one long procession more,
Shalt thou behold—sad, slow, funereal pomp,
And nations weeping o'er thy Montcalm's bier.
The victor vanquish'd ! That competitor
Worthy of Britain's Wolfe—less fortunate,
Not less heroic—doom'd alike to fall.
Immortal both ! Equal their love of fame ;
Their genius equal, and their scorn of death.
Then, when the mid-day torches shall no more

Cast the dim gloom of mockery on the slain ;
Although no marble tells where thou are laid,
Miranion, night shall love the lonely spot,
The stars shall look in silence on its flowers,
The moon-beams there shall slumber, and the dews
Weep o'er a hapless virgin's modest grave.



INSCRIPTIONS.



I.

AMID the moss'd old forest's loneliness,
To warn the future poet, and to wake
The tender thought, these lines a studious youth
Carved on this tree. Haply some man of mind,
Hereafter, may the rhymeless verses read,
And drop amid the druid solitude
The tear that angels envy. Chatterton
Lived but to die—perchance without a prayer !
A sable angel, tearing her own heart
With dreadful transport, lured him to her arms !
These wilds will see no more his hopeless smile ;
No more the moon-beam in his dewy eye
Will glisten ; and no more the cloudless night

Hear, from her starry throne, his lonely steps !
O God ! forgive him, though he ask'd thee not !

II.

STOP, man, and read ! A nameless person—one
Whom the gay sons of proud frivolity
Knew not, and therefore scorn'd not—slumbers here ;
His life was one long day of misery ;
Yet sank he not beneath the load of life.
His tested soul, with holy quietness,
Smiled at the malice of adversity,
And rose on wings of humble faith to God.
Reader, do thou resemble this poor man
In all things but his fortunes. Go and speed !

III.

Now nought is mine ! Yet, what I had, I have !
The wings that bore my soul from earth to heaven !
And still, untired, through fields of amplitude,
The pinions of my fervour shall advance
With growing swiftness ; for beneath his throne—
Whom seeking, my soul soars unsatisfied—
Time lowly bends, and Power, the giant, kneels,
While Harmony proclaims her Father's name.



MY FIRST SONNET.



HAIL to the Christian ! Bold is he, to stand
On danger's rock, undaunted, to pursue
The paths of right. What power shall him subdue ?
Not thine, all-shunn'd Misfortune ! though thy hand
Waves the keen edge of hunger as a brand ;
Nor thine, Prosperity, whose magic dew
Melts the iced rock to water ! He shall view
Th' elect of God, with them walk hand in hand.
His emblem is the mountain, capp'd with snow,
And gnarl'd with forests ; by tempestuous fire
Above scourged vainly ; and assail'd below
By ocean's vainly storm-conflicting ire ;
Th' Eternal Mountain ! that, while tides shall flow,
Will commune with the stars, and bid his pines aspire.



THE EXILE.



TO EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, Esq., who helped me when I
was helpless and unknown, I beg leave to dedicate this
Poem.

I.

WORLD-LIGHTING flambeau of that awful One
Whose greatness thought hath not conceived ! thou
bright
And ruby-hair'd similitude of might
Omniscient yet invisible and lone ;
The stillness of all power upon his throne—
The life of life—whose fountain none can tell !
Thou flar'st o'er ocean's nation-girding streams
Fearless of change, as though, indeed, thy beams
Were of the eternal, uncreated light.
High, not secure ! bright, not unchangeable !
What dost thou see above, around, below ?
Unweeping pride and pleasure only ? No !
Vicissitude and ruin are to thee
Familiar. Prosperer ! thou look'st on me
And feel'st no pity. But thyself shalt fade,
Extinguish'd, as a taper. He who made
Can unmake all things. He who reigns alone,
The sole unrivall'd—He whose burning throne

Is wheel'd on suns—shall quench thee with a frown,
And cast thy dust beneath his axle down ;
Crush'd, thou shalt roll no more. No wrinkle yet
Of age insults thy beauty. Thou art bright
As man's vain youth, with harlot joys beset,
Who says, while love, in ecstasy divine,
Seals his warm cheek with lips that glow like thine,
“ *My fortune shall be splendid as thy light.*”
Thou laughing parent of the woful years !
Hence, with thy beams that mock the sorrowing
heart !
In all thy pageantry of flame, depart !
And let me commune with sad night in tears.

II.

But day yet lingers in the gorgeous west,
O'er capes that smile like islands of the bless'd ;
His red orb biggens as his beams retire,
And wide Potomac undulates in fire ;
While giant clouds, that o'er his hills aspire,
Curtain the setting sun, whose broad brow glows
As if he wish'd, gazing in transport deep,
To look sweet evening into blushing sleep ;
And, ere he slumber'd, kiss her in repose—
Then sink to golden rest. Above thy tide,
Wild river ! on the headlands at thy side,
With straining eye, the Exile, Alfred, stands,
And thinks, with fever'd soul, of distant lands ;

Thinks of loved England, whence, by terror led,
Escaped from Worcester's fatal fight, he fled,
And sought in desert woods, o'er ocean cross'd,
To cherish life, when all its joys were lost.
Dear to that Exile now are memory's tales,
For now they speak of Avon's dewy dales—
Sweet scenes, whose pleasures he no more may share,
And her, his love, who mourns deserted there.

III.

He saw eve's beamy purple fade away ;
He watch'd the changeful clouds till all was grey ;
He started—" 'Twas the waving grass ! " he said,
" I *am* not watch'd : or, fluttering overhead,
Did the owl start the oriole from rest ?
The humming-bird reposes on the flower ;
Fragrance drinks freshness in her richest bower ;
High roosts the turkey ; on Potomac's breast
The mallard sleeps ; and here the rattlesnake,
Couch'd on his coils—the desert's deadly pest !
The bull-frog booms not yet ; all accentless,
The listening wave doth not a pebble shake ;
Nor doth a sound disturb the loneliness
Of Nature in her slumbers ; nor a breeze
Skim o'er the boundless forest, to awake
The tempest-braving pine of centuries ;
And, while the stars that guard the tranquil skies
Look down in silence on the silent trees,

High on the mountain's crest the lonely cloud
Reposes, like a giant in his shroud :
How silently ! Haply, at this sweet hour,
In England, to the purple-blossom'd heath
The sun-tann'd peat-man plods ; while every bower
Weeps in the eye of morn, the drover wakes
With dewy locks ; and, while his plaid he shakes,
O'er crumpled grass unbathed by midnight shower.
Calls his tried dog that lurks the thorn beneath—
Roused by whose voice, the bird that loves the sky
Sheds bright pearls from his clover canopy,
And, soaring, sings ! And, o'er her fragrant pail,
More sweetly sings the milk-maid in the vale ;
And the mist lessens on the distant sea ;
And o'er the rooky grove the smoke curls slow ;
And fair the halcyon is on writhen tree,
Whose giant arms stretch where the rock is riven ;
But fairer far, on quivering waves below,
Are rock, tree, halcyon, and serenest heaven.
Oh, bless'd is he, who, arm'd with dusky gun,
Sees on Britannian wastes the moor fowl run,
Or, flying, fall ! Oh, bless'd who hears the bells
Sound o'er the dewy smile of Albion's dells,
While age, and youth, and blissful love repair
To sabbath service, country wake, or fair !
But is my injured Emma happy there ?”

IV.

He spake in tears of sweetly mingled pain :
What though the heart that nurses love is fain
To build in darkness his unsocial seat ?
What though he loves the desert-spirit's sigh ?
The tear that visits seldom his sad eye,
Though life hath sweeter tears, may yet be sweet.
Pensive and pale, return'd he to his farm,
Where wealth was his, but not contentment's charm ;
And as, with pausing footsteps, he came near,
Sad tones, that spake of wither'd joys once dear—
Tones that his heart acknowledged—met his ear,
And retrospection drank of aconite.
A moment blank he stood, then onward flew ;
But, as with lightning blasted, back he drew ;
And, trembling, gazed—on what appalling sight ?
No dusky daughter of the burning day,
Shrank from the slave-herd's whip, uplifted high ;
On no dark maid of fervid Africa
Gloated that scourger's Algerian eye ;
But, born where men are free and maids are fair,
From happy Albion wafted o'er the wave,
And late arrived, a convict and a slave,
Was she for whose wild shriek he hunger'd there ;
And on her cheek of woe the rose had been.
To Alfred's tongue words came not ; but there came
Strength to his arm, and to his spirit flame.

He rush'd the mourner and the pang between ;
And, stunn'd beneath his blow, the slave-herd sank,
And rose, and fell, and rose again, and drank
Not with his eyes his victim's starting blood,
But, coughing, drank his own, and ghastly stood,
Then, faint, the convict totter'd to her shed ;
Her sable sisters, weeping, stay'd her tread,
And laid on leaves of maize her languid head,
Where soon, by sad dreams visited, she slept,
And wildly, in her broken slumbers, wept.

v.

But Alfred slept not. On his spirit broke
A troubled light ; and in his heart awoke
The power that smiles to see the gloom increase,
And, sleeping on the thunder, dreams of peace,
And holiest stillness—the storm's angel, Hope.
Oh, 'reft of her, could man, the insect, cope
With darkness, dread, and danger? He arose,
Leaving the mattress of his pale unrest,
And walk'd into the cool and midnight air,
That whisper'd to the wildness of his breast,
Like spirit from the islands of repose,
And almost lull'd to sleep the demon, Care.

VI.

Darkness was spread o'er half the sky. The moon
Slept on her sea of blue. The stars appear'd
To dream around her, in night's awful noon !
Wild lightnings, fluttering distant, fringed with fire
The growing darkness of the wrathful west ;
And, on sublime Potomac's troubled breast,
Convolved in seeming agony and ire,
The red reflection, like a dragon, burn'd.
And though the coming thunder was not heard,
Yet, on the breezeless sky perturb'd, in dread
The silent bear his gleaming eye-balls turn'd ;
Hoarse croak'd the eagle on the mountain's head ;
The buffalo, in ominous horror low'd ;
The storm-fiend whisper'd from his desert cave :
The forest shudder'd ; the tumultuous cloud
Wander'd in heav'n ; black roll'd the moaning wave.

VII.

Lone stood the cabin of the pallid slave ;
And, through the door unclosed, a pine-torch cast
Its wrinkling beam. With trembling knees, he pass'd
Before the wan light thrice, then stood to gaze.
She slumber'd still, and still she wept in sleep,
While o'er her sad face gleam'd the feeble blaze.
He enter'd, and he could not choose but weep ;

For, as he bent above her faded frame,
In murmuring accents faint, she sigh'd his name.
“Emma!” he said; but falteringly he spoke,
And kiss'd her brow; again—and she awoke,
And shriek'd, and rose half up, convulsed with fear;
Then, trembling, turn'd, and hid her face in shame.
But he, with soothing words, and many a tear,
Spoke to her woe, bidding her yet be glad,
And question'd of her destiny severe,
And how, and why, she met a doom so sad?
She did not lift her eye—she fear'd to look
On him who talk'd of comfort—but it came;
For, like a sweet remember'd vision, stole
His tones of pity on her drooping soul;
Or, like the liquid music of the brook
To thirst's charm'd ear, when the unseen waters creep
Beneath the blossoming umbrage of the vale,
Among flowers dear to woe, that love to weep.
And thus she told her melancholy tale,
While, o'er the hut, loud moan'd the increasing gale,
And nearer thunder chased the lightning pale.

VIII.

“Oh, thou art good! I did not hope to hear
The voice of kindness in this land of fear.
My love went to the war, and came not back;
Prince Charles, they said, was worsted in the strife:
Anxious, I watch'd on expectation's rack;

But Alfred fled beyond the sea for life.
Soon I became—a mother !—not a wife !
My wrathful parents spurn'd me from their door.
Oh, cherish'd like the choicest garden flower,
And nurtured on the breast of tenderness,
And all unused to the evil hour,
How should their silk-clad daughter face distress ?
Where should the out-cast Emma lay her head ?
I sought and found a little lowly shed,
Where long we lived, resign'd and calm, though
poor :

My active needle earned our daily bread.
But, sickness, then, by famine follow'd came :
My hungry boy look'd up for food, and pined !
My wearying task was profitless ; my frame
Enfeebled by disease, unnerved my mind.
I would not beg the alms of charity,
Nor ask the legal dole of paupery ;
No, I did worse, far worse—Heaven pardon me !
Thou wouldst not think that Emma once was fair ;
Yet fair she was, or Envy's self hath lied ;
And she had still some sweet and drooping charms ;
But she had still some virtue, and some pride.
I turn'd abhorrent from lust's venomous arms ;
How *could* I clasp pollution to my heart ?
I wept, and pray'd, but want would not depart ;
And my boy's asking look, so pale and sad,
Drove me, in one unhappy moment, mad.

No pitying daughter of the rich and free,
With angel looks and bounty, came to me.
Oh, how I envied then the spotless maid,
Who pass'd me, blushing, and almost afraid !
Spurn'd by the base, scarce pitied by the good,
Affliction rush'd upon me, like a flood.
No aid without, and want and woe within ;
Deserted—ah, no ! left—by him I loved ;
My life's life was that boy, the child of sin !
What mother's heart could see his tears unmoved ?
I pawn'd the stolen silk !—detected—tried
In the throng'd court I stood, half petrified,
And there was doom'd beyond the billowy tide,
On wild Columbia's shore of tears to groan.

IX.

“ As on the strand I stood—and not alone,
But chain'd to others, like in crime and fate,
And female, too, though lost to female fears—
A man approach'd, more old in grief than years,
And kiss'd the fetter'd hand he bathed with tears,
And, faltering, strove, but strove in vain, to speak.
Oh, he was changed ! but Emma knew him well ;
And with him came forgiveness, though too late.
But when he ask'd forgiveness of his child,
His guilty child, I thought my heart would break !
And when I bade him to my mother bear
A lock of hapless Emma's golden hair—

A kiss from one so lost—and pray'd him tell
If she, too, had the sinful one forgiv'n—
O God ! in more than agony, he *smiled*,
Then raved, amid his tears, in laughter wild !
' Emma,' he said, ' thy mother is in Heav'n,
Brought to the grave with sorrow—not by thee—
It was God's will ! and none from sin are free.'
Again he kiss'd me, and he turn'd to go ;
But no—poor Emma would not have it so ;
He saw the boy on whom my sad eye fell,
And kiss'd my little Alfred—then—farewell !
I saw him not, but sobb'd, in sorrow blind,
And heard his faint ' God bless thee !' in the wind.

X.

“ Ah, surely in that hour I should have died,
But that my boy clung fondly to my side,
And, not in vain, to soothe his mother tried !
Then came a thought which nature could not bear :
' What ! take him from me ?' shriek'd my heart's
despair.
But little Alfred left the land with me ;
And, while the tall ship rush'd into the sea,
He sate, and smiled upon his mother's knee,
Pleased with the sails, the motion, and the deep.
The billows seem'd to rock my cares to sleep.

Oh, there was comfort in the dreadful thought
That far from happiest England I should go,
Where none who knew me could behold my woe,
To taunt the shame that want and sin had brought ;
And that the poor companions of my way
Were wretches too, but I less vile than they !
I loved to sit upon the airy deck,
While swell'd the moonlight heav'ns, without a speck,
O'er ocean without wrinkle ; and I loved,
While star-light only glimmer'd through the clouds.
And, arrow-like, and billow-borne, we moved,
To hear the fresh gale whistle in the shrouds,
And see the manèd waves each other chase,
Like flaming coursers in the endless race.
Then, with delighted terror, from the prow,
High on the mountain billow's summit curl'd,
Down look'd I on the wat'ry vales below,
That, like a tenantless and hopeless world,
Barren and black, and deepening chilly, frown'd.
And, on that far land, whither I was bound,
Enthusiast Hope beheld, nor whip, nor chains ;
But hill and shadowy vale seem'd fairy ground,
And groves elysian deck'd the teeming plains ;
And airy fingers form'd, with many a flower
Of dulcet breath, a visionary bower ;
And there my fancy wander'd with my child,
And saw him strive, with lifted hand, to reach
The grape's dark luxury, or the glowing peach ;

And Peace walk'd with us through the balmy wild,
Look'd on my tears, nor only look'd, but smiled.

XI.

“ O Heaven ! thou shouldst, according to the load,
Apportion strength to bear it on the road !
My boy refused his food, forgot to play,
And sicken'd on the waters, day by day.
He smiled more seldom on his mother's smile ;
He prattled less, in accents void of guile,
Of that wild land, beyond the golden wave,
Where I, not he, was doom'd to be a slave !
Cold o'er his limbs a listless languor grew ;
Paleness came o'er his eye of placid blue ;
Pale mourn'd the lily, where the rose had died,
And timid, trembling, clung he to my side.
He was my all on earth. Oh, who can speak
The anxious mother's too prophetic woe,
Who sees death feeding on her dear child's cheek,
And strives in vain to think it is not so ?
Ah ! many a sad and sleepless night I pass'd,
O'er his couch listening, in the pausing blast,
While on his brow, more sad from hour to hour,
Droop'd wan dejection, like a fading flower !
At length, my boy seem'd better, and I slept—
Oh, soundly ! but, methought, my mother wept

O'er her poor Emma, and, in accents low,
Said, 'Ah ! why do I weep ? and weep in vain
For one so loved, so lost ? Emma, thy pain
Draws to a close ! e'en now is rent in twain
The loveliest link that binds thy breast to woe.
Soon, broken heart, we soon shall meet again !'
Then o'er my face her freezing hand she cross'd,
And, bending, kiss'd me, with her lip of frost.
I waked ; and, at my side—Oh ! still and cold !—
Oh ! what a tale that dreadful chillness told !
Shrieking, I started up, in terror wild ;
Alas ! and had I lived to dread my child ?
Eager, I snatch'd him from his swinging bed ;
His limbs were stiff—he moved not—he was dead !

XII.

"O let me weep !—what mother would not weep
To see her child committed to the deep ?—
All lifeless, o'er his marble forehead roll'd,
The third night saw his locks repose in gold.
Methinks 'twas moonlight, and a torch cast wide
Its lanthorn'd radiance o'er the umber'd tide,
As wan on deck he lay, serenely fair,
And, oh ! so like his sire ! that man of care,
(From home, and hope, and all he loved, impell'd,)
Who ne'er his child, in life, or death, beheld,
And *could* not come, my breaking heart to share !

No mournful flowers, by weeping fondness laid,
Nor pink, nor rose, droop'd on his breast display'd,
Nor half-blown daisy, in his little hand.
Wide was the field around, but 'twas not land.
His features wore a sweet and pensive grace,
And death was beauty on his silent face.
No more his sad eye look'd me into tears !
Closed was that eye beneath his pale cold brow ;
And on his calm lips, which had lost their glow,
But which, though pale, seem'd half unclosed to
 speak,
Loiter'd a smile, like moonlight on the snow.
I gazed upon him still—not wild with fears—
Gone were my fears, and present was despair !
But, as I gazed, a little lock of hair,
Stirr'd by the breeze, play'd, trembling, on his cheek ;
O God ! my heart !—I thought life still was there !
But, to commit him to his watery grave,
O'er which the winds, unwearied mourners, rave—
One, who strove darkly sorrow's sob to sway,
Upraised the body ; thrice I bade him stay ;
For still my wordless heart had much to say,
And still I bent, and gazed, and, gazing, wept.
At last, my sisters, with humane constraint,
Held me, and I was calm as dying saint ;
While the stern weeper lower'd into the sea
My ill-starr'd boy ! deep—buried deep he slept.
And then I look'd to heav'n in agony,

And pray'd to end my pilgrimage of pain,
That I might meet my beauteous boy again !
Oh, had he lived to reach this wretched land,
And then expired—I would have bless'd the strand.
But, where my poor boy lies I may not lie ;
I cannot come, with broken heart, to sigh
O'er his loved dust, and strew with flowers his turf :
His pillow hath no cover but the surf !
I may not pour the soul drop from mine eye
Near his cold bed ; he slumbers in the wave !
Oh, I will *love* the sea, because it is his grave !”

XIII.

Weeping, she saw not him whose swimming eye
O'erflowed with bitterness and agony ;
But, when he smote his breast with frenzied force,
And, stamping, cursed himself in dread remorse ;
Then started she—as one who sleeps with pain
O'erwearied starts awake, but sleeps again ;
And soon, more calm, with alter'd voice, she said—
“ Perhaps my boy had lived, had Alfred stay'd !
Ah ! wherefore fled he, hopeless and afraid ?
And, ah ! why fled not Emma at his side ?
I on the scaffold would with him have died.
Without a look, a kiss, a tear, he went ;
Unheard by Emma, every prayer he sent

To heav'n, (while grim Mischance stood by, and
smiled,)

To bless the mother of his unborn child !

Nor after weeks, and months, and mournful years,

Did his dear letter, long, and stain'd with tears,

Bring to her bosom, o'er the waters wide,

Comfort and hope, which nought could bring beside !

Alas ! he fled not, but at Worcester died !”

XIV.

“ O blame him not !” exclaim'd the self-blamed youth,

“ If he has err'd, forgive his fault, forgive !

And canst thou doubt thy Alfred's love and truth ?

And deem him false, who lives to bid thee live ?

We both live, Emma, happier days to see ;

Behold, 'tis Alfred's self, preserved for thee !

Come to my heart ! thou still art all to me.”

XV.

Ah, clasp'd he death ? or did she lifeless seem ?

Slackening his grasp, he stoop'd but heard no sigh !

Then paleness blush'd ; and life's returning beam

Relum'd the faded azure of her eye,

Faintly she strove to clasp him to her side.

“ Was it, indeed, my angel's voice ?” she cried ;

“And wilt thou take the convict to thy breast?
And shall the vile, the outcast, the oppress’d,
The poor and trodden worm, again be bless’d?
Ah, no, no—heav’n ordaineth otherwise!
My love!—we meet too late!—thy Emma dies.”

XVI.

Then, with clasp’d hands, and fervent hearts dismay’d,
That she might live for him, both mutely pray’d.
But, o’er their silence burst the heavy blast;
And, wrapp’d in darkness, the sky-torrent pass’d;
And down the giants of the forest dash’d;
And, pale as day, the night with lightning flash’d;
And, through awed heav’n, a peal, that might have
been

The funeral dirge of suns and systems, crash’d:
More dread, more near, the bright blue blaze was
seen,

Peal following peal, with direr pause between.
On the wild light she turn’d her wilder eye,
And grasp’d his hands, in dying agony,
Fast, and still faster, as the flash rush’d by.
“Spare me!” she cried. “Oh, thou destroying rod!
Hark! ’tis the voice of unforgiving God!—
A mother murder’d, and a sire in woe!
Alfred, the deed was mine! for thee, for thee,
I broke her heart, and turn’d his locks to snow!
Hark! ’tis the roaring of the mighty sea!

Lo, how the mountain-billows fall and rise !
And while their rage, beneath the howling night,
Lifts my boy's tresses to the wild moonlight,
Yet doth the wretch, th' unwedded mother, live,
Who, for those poor unvalued locks would give
All, save her hope to kiss them in the skies !
But see ! he rises from his wat'ry bed,
And at his guilty mother shakes his head !
There, dost thou see him, blue and shivering stand,
And lift at thee his little threatening hand ?
Oh, dreadful !—Hold me !—Catch me !—Die with
me !—
Alas ! that must not, and it should not be !
No—pray that both our sins may be forgiv'n ;
Then come ! and heav'n will—will indeed be heav'n !”

XVII.

He felt her slackening grasp his hand forego,
And grasp'd more firmly hers, in speechless woe.
Quiver'd her cheek, with death's convulsions streak'd :
Still gazed he—all was fix'd ! he started up, and
shriek'd.

XVIII.

No sound is heard, save of the brook increased ;
The weary cloud is still. The blast hath ceased
To rend the wildly fluctuating sky,
And tear the tall pine from his place on high.

Meek quiet on the freshen'd verdure sleeps ;
Less frequent, from the beauteous cedar weeps
The heavy rain-drop on the flower beneath ;
And, fainter round the hills, the dying gale
Murmurs the requiem of departed night ;
While, like bless'd isles, the woods emerge in light,
In placid light, fair as the brow of death
O'er which that mourner bends, so lost and pale.
" Emma, how sweet the calm that follows storms !
How sweet to sleep in tears, and wake in heav'n !"
Morn soon will smile on Nature's drooping charms,
And smooth the tresses which the night hath riven ;
But no sun shall arise that wretch to cheer ;
Alas ! his grief despairs, and hath no tear !
From heav'n's deep blue, the stars steal, one by one ;
Pale fades the moon—still paler—she is gone.
As yet, no marshall'd clouds in splendour roll'd,
See, on Potomac's breast their mirror'd gold ;
Yet, eastward, lo ! th' horizon, forest-fringed,
Blushes—and dusky heights are ruby-tinged !
Lo ! like a warrior in impatient ire,
On mail'd steed, fire-scarf'd, and helm'd with fire,
Forth rides the sun, in burning beauty strong,
Hurling his bright shafts, as he darts along !
Oh, not more splendidly emerged the morn
When light, and life, and blissful love were born,
And day and beauty, ere his woes began,
Smiled first elysium on the soul of man,

And—while no cloud in stillest heav'n was seen—
O'er ocean's waveless magnitude serene,
Rose, all on flame his vital race to run,
In dreadless youth, how proudly rose that sun !
And, see ! o'er Emma's still and snowy cheek
There comes a glow, ethereal, heav'nly, meek,
As if a lily blush'd to meet the light !
But what, wan Exile ! may be said to thee ?
Look'st thou on death ? then death is fair to see.
The sunbeams mingle with her lifeless hair ;
From her closed eye a tear is stealing slow ;
Life seems to linger on the silence there,
Like fragrance in a gather'd rose of snow ;
But, oh ! that kiss of ice !—despair !—despair !—
Ah ! woods and waves, and heav'n and earth are
 bright ;
But on the hopeless Exile's heart—'tis night !



BOTHWELL :

A DRAMATIC POEM.

To my great Master, ROBERT SOUTHEY, who Condescended to teach me the Art of Poetry, I most respectfully dedicate this Drama.

SCENE—*Inside of a dungeon, in a fortress on the coast of Norway. BOTHWELL sleeping. RHINVALT gazing through a barred window on the rocks, and stormy sea below.*

Rhin. Splendour in heaven, and horror on the main !

Sunshine and storm at once—a troubled day.
 Clouds roll in brightness, and descend in rain.
 How the waves rush into the rocky bay,
 Shaking th' eternal barriers of the land !
 And ocean's face is like a battle plain,
 Where giant demons combat hand to hand ;
 While, as their voices sink and swell again,
 Peace, listening on the rainbow, bends in pain.
 Where is the voice, whose stillness man's heart hears,
 Like dream'd-of music, wordless, soft, and low ?
 The voice, which dries on Sorrow's cheek her tears,
 Or, lest she perish, bids the current flow ?

That voice the whirlwind in his rage reveres ;
It bids the blast a tranquil sabbath keep :
Lonely as death, harmonious as the spheres,
It whispers to the wildness of the deep,
'Till, calm as cradled babe, the billows sleep.
Oh, careless of the tempest in his ire,
Blush, ruby glow of western heav'n ! Oh, cast
The hue of roses, steep'd in liquid fire,
On ocean in his conflict with the blast,
And quiver into darkness, and retire,
And let wild day to calmest night subside ;
Let the tired sailor from his toil respire,
The drench'd flag hang, unmoving, o'er the tide,
And, pillow'd on still clouds, the whirlwind ride !
Then, Queen of Silence, robe thee, and arise,
And, through the barr'd loop of this dungeon old,
Visit, once more, its inmate's blasted eyes !
Let him again, though late, thy light behold !
Soulless, not sightless, have his eye-balls roll'd,
Alike, in light and darkness, desolate.
The storm beat on his heart—he felt no cold ;
Summer look'd on him, from heaven's fiery gate—
Shivering, he scowl'd, and knew not that he scowl'd.
Unweeping, yet perturb'd ; his bed a stone ;
Bonds on his body—on his mind a spell ;
Ten years in solitude, (yet not alone,)
And conscious only to the inward hell ;
Here hath it been his hideous lot to dwell.

But heav'n can bid the spirit's gloom depart,
Can chase from his torn soul the demon fell,
And, whispering, find a listener in his heart.
O let him weep again ! then, tearless dwell,
In his dark, narrow home, unrun by passing bell !

[A long pause. Loud thunder; and, after an interval, thunder heard remote.]

The storm hath ceased. The sun is set : the trees
Are fain to slumber ; and, on ocean's breast,
How softly, yet how solemnly, the breeze,
With unperceived gradation, sinks to rest !
No voice, no sound is on the ear impress'd ;
Twilight is weeping o'er the pensive rose ;
The stoat slumbers, coil'd up in his nest ;
The grosbeak on the owl's perch seeks repose ;
And o'er the heights, behold ! a pale light glows.
Waked by the bat, up springs the startled snake ;
The cloud's edge brightens—lo, the moon ! and
grove,

And tree, and shrub, bathed in her beams, awake,
With tresses cluster'd like the locks of love.
Behold ! the ocean's tremor ! slowly move
The cloud-like sails ; and, as their way they urge,
Fancy might almost deem she saw, above,
The streamer's chasten'd hues ; bright sleeps the
surge,
And dark the rocks, on ocean's glittering verge.

Now lovers meet, and labour's task is done.
 Now stillness hears the breathing heifer. Now
 Heav'n's azure deepens ; and, where rock-rills run,
 Rest on the shadowy mountain's airy brow
 Clouds that have ta'en their farewell of the sun ;
 While calmness, reigning o'er that wintry clime,
 Pauses and listens ;—hark ! the evening gun !
 Oh, hark !—the sound expires ! and silence is sublime.
 Moonlight o'er ocean's stillness ! on the crest
 Of the poor maniac, moonlight !—He is calm ;
 Calmer he soon will be in endless rest :—
 O, be thy coolness to his brow as balm,
 And breathe, thou fresh breeze, on his burning breast !
 For memory is returning to his brain ;
 The dreadful past, with worse than woe impress'd ;
 And torturing time's eternity of pain ;
 The curse of mind returns ! O take it back again !

[*A long pause, during which he bends anxiously over
 Bothwell.*]

Alas ! how flutteringly he draws his breath !

Both. My blessed Mary !

Rhin.

Calmer he appears—

Sad, fatal symptom ! swift approaches death.

Both. Mary ! a hand of fire my bosom sears.—

Oh do not leave me !—Heavenly Mary !—years,
 Ages of torture pass'd, and thou can'st not ;
 I waited still, and watch'd, but not in tears ;

I could not weep ; mine eyes are dry and hot,
 And long, long since, to shed a tear forgot.
 A word ! though it condemn me !—stay ! she's gone !
 Gone ! and to come no more ! [*He faints.*]

Rhin.

Ah, is it so ?

His pilgrimage is o'er, his task is done ;
 How grimly still he lies ! yet his eyes glow,
 As with strange meaning. Troubled spirit, go !
 How threateningly his teeth are clench'd ! how fast
 He clutches his grasp'd hair !—hush !—breathless ?
 No !

Life still is here, though withering hope be past ;
 Come, bridegroom of despair ! and be this sigh his
 last.

Both. Where am I ? What art thou ?

Rhin.

Call me a friend,

And this a prison.

Both.

Voice of torture, cease !—

Oh, it returns !—terrific vision, end !—

When was it ? Yesterday ? no matter—peace !

I do remember, and too well, too well !

Rhin. How is it with thee ?

Both.

Why wilt thou offend ?—

Ha ! all ye fiends of earth, and ye of hell,

I surely *am* awake ! Thine angel send,

Thou, King of Terrors call'd, and break this hideous
 spell !

Rhin. A tear ? and shed by thee ?

Both. I breathed in flame ;
The sleepless worm of wrath was busy here ;
When—ah, it was a dream !—my lady came,
Lovely and wan in woe, with the big tear
To cool my fever'd soul. In love and fear,
O'er me she bent, as at the Hermitage,
When (maim'd in conflict with the mountaineer)
She kiss'd my wounds, while Darnley swell'd with rage ;
Tears only ! not a word ! she fled !—and I am here.
She fled ; and then, within a sable room,
Methought I saw the headsman and the axe ;
And men stood round the block, with brows of gloom,
Gazing, yet mute, as images of wax ;
And, while the victim moved to meet her doom,
All wept for Mary Stuart. Pale, she bent,
As when we parted last ; yet towards the tomb
Calmly she look'd, and, smiling, prayers up sent
To pitying heav'n. A deep and fearful boom
Of mutter'd accents rose, when to the ground
The sever'd head fell bleeding ! and, aghast,
Horror on horror stared. And then a sound
Swell'd, hoarsely yelling, on the sudden blast,
As of a female voice that mimick'd woe ;
But, as above that hall of death it pass'd,
'Twas changed into a laugh, wild, sullen, low,
Like a fiend's growl, who, from heav'n's splendour
cast,
Quaffs fire and wrath, where pain's red embers glow.

Do I not know thee? I'm forgetful grown :
Where did I see thee first ?

Rhin. Here, even here ;
Thy ten years' comrade—still to thee unknown.
In all that time thou didst not shed a tear
Until this hour. Raving, with groan on groan,
Thou spak'st of more than horror, and thy moan
Was torture's music. O'er thy forehead hot
Thine hands were clasp'd ; and still wast thou alone,
Brooding o'er things that have been, and are not,
Though I was with thee, almost turn'd to stone,
Here, where I pined for twenty years before
Thy coming.

Both. Thirty years a prisoner !
Here, didst thou say?

Rhin. Ay, thirty years and more.
My wife !—O never may I look on her !
My children !

Both. Didst thou spill man's blood ; or why ?

Rhin. I spilt man's blood in battle. Oh, no more,
Liberty, shall I breath thy air on high
Where the cloud travels, or along the shore
Where the waves frown, like patriots sworn to die !
I met th' oppressors of my native land,
(Wide waved their plumes o'er Norway's wilds afar,)
I met them, breast to breast, and hand to hand,
O'ercome, not vanquish'd, in the unequal war :
And this is Freedom's grave.

Both. Freedom? Thou fool,
Deserving chains! Freedom?—a word to scare
The sceptred babe. Of thy own dream thou tool
And champion, white in folly! From me far
Be rant like thine—of sound a senseless jar.

Rhin. Say, who art thou that rav'st of murder'd
kings,
And dar'st, before her champion vow'd, profane
The name of Freedom? Long forgotten things
To my soul beckon; and my hand would fain
(Stung by thy venom) grasp a sword again,
In battle with these tyrants! Gone?—alas!
'Tis the death-rattle in the throat—his pain
Draws to a close. Again? Dark spirit, pass!

Both. Lift, lift me up! that on my burning brain
The pallid light may shine! and let me see
Once more the ocean. Thanks! Hail, placid deep!
Oh, the cold light is comfort! and to me
The freshness of the breeze comes like sweet sleep
To him whose tears his painful pillow steep!
When last I saw those billows they were red.
Mate of my dungeon! know'st thou why I weep?
My chariot, and my war-horse, and my bed,
Ocean, before me swells, in all its glory spread.
Lovely! still lovely Nature! and a line
Of quivering beams, athwart the wavy space,
Runs like a beauteous road to realms divine,
Ending where sea and stooping heav'n embrace.

Crisp'd with glad smiles in ocean's aged face ;
Gemm'd are the fingers of his wrinkled hand.
Like glittering fishes, in the wanton race,
The little waves leap laughing to the land,
Light following light—an everlasting chase.
Lovely, still lovely ! chaste moon, is thy beam
Now laid on Jedburgh's mossy walls asleep,
Where Mary pined for me ; or dost thou gleam
O'er Stirling, where I first, in transport deep,
Kiss'd her bless'd hand, when Darnley bade her weep ;
Or o'er Linlithgow and the billows blue,
Where (captured on the forest-waving steep)
She almost fear'd my love, so dear and true ;
Or on that sad field, where she could but look adieu ?

Rhin. Weep on ! if thou, indeed, art he whose
fame

Hath pierced th' oblivion even of this tomb,
Where life is buried, and whose fearful name
Amazement loves to speak, while o'er thy doom,
Trembling, he weeps. *Did* she, whose charms make
tame

All other beauty, Scotland's matchless Queen,
Creation's wonder, on that wither'd frame,
Enamour'd smile ? Sweet tears there are, I ween ;
Speak then of her, where tears are shed more oft than
seen.

Both. Perhaps the artist might, with cunning hand,
Mimic the morn on Mary's lip of love ;

And fancy might before the canvas stand,
And deem he saw th' unreal bosom move.
But who could paint her heav'nly soul, which glows
With more than kindness—the soft thoughts that rove
Over the moonlight of her heart's repose—
The wish to hood the falcon, spare the dove,
Destroy the thorn, and multiply the rose ?
Oh, hadst thou words of fire, thou couldst not paint
My Mary in her majesty of mind,
Expressing half the queen and half the saint !
Her fancy, wild as pinions of the wind,
Or sky-ascending eagle, that looks down,
Calm, on the homeless cloud he leaves behind ;
Yet beautiful as freshest flower full blown,
That bends beneath the midnight dews reclined ;
Or yon resplendent path, o'er ocean's slumber thrown.
'Twas such a night—O ne'er, bless'd thought, de-
part !—

When Mary utter'd first, in words of flame,
The love, the guilt, the madness of her heart,
While on my bosom burn'd her cheek of shame.
Thy blood is ice, and, therefore, thou wilt blame
The queen, the woman, the adulterous wife,
The hapless, and the fair !—Oh, but her name
Needs not thy mangling ! Her disastrous life
Needs not thy curse ! Spare, slanderer, spare her
fame !

Then wore the heav'ns, as now, the clouded veil ;

Yet mark'd I well her tears, and that wan smile
So tender, so confiding, whose sweet tale,
By memory told, can even now beguile
My spirit of its gloom ! for then the pale
Sultana of the night her form display'd,
Pavilion'd in the pearly clouds afar,
Like brightness sleeping, or a naked maid,
In virgin charms unrivall'd ; while each star,
Astonish'd at her beauty, seem'd to fade—
Each planet, envy-stung, to turn aside—
Veiling their blushes with their golden hair.
Oh ! moment rich in transport, love, and pride !
Big, too, with woe, with terror, with despair !

The quivering flesh, though torture-torn, may live ;
But souls, once deeply wounded, heal no more :
And deem'st thou that scorn'd woman can forgive ?
Darnley, thou dream'st, but not as heretofore !

Yet Mary wept for Darnley, while she kiss'd
His murderer's cheek at midnight. Sad was she ;
And he, who then had seen her, would have miss'd
The rose that was not where it wont to be,
Or marvell'd at its paleness. None might see
The heart, but on the features there was woe.
Then put she on a mask, and gloomily—
For dance and ball prepared—arose to go :
“ Spare, spare my Darnley's life ! ” she said—but
mean'd she so ?

Now bends the murderer—Mark his forehead fell !
What says the dark deliberation there?—
Now bends the murderer—Hark !—it is a knell !—
Hark !—sound or motion ? 'Twas his cringing hair.
Now bends the murderer—wherefore doth he start ?
'Tis silence—silence that is terrible !
When he hath business, silence should depart,
And maniac darkness, borrowing sounds from hell,
Suffer him not to hear his throbbing heart?—
Now bends the murderer o'er the dozing King,
Who, like an o'er-gorged serpent, motionless,
Lies drunk with wine, a seeming-senseless thing ;
Yet his eyes roll with dreadful consciousness,
Thickens his throat in impotent distress,
And his voice strives for utterance, while that wretch
Doth on his royal victim's bosom press
His knee, preparing round his neck to stretch
The horrible cord. Lo ! dark as th' alpine vetch,
Stares his wide-open, blood-shot, bursting eye,
And on the murderer flashes vengeful fire ;
While the black visage, in dire agony,
Swells, like a bloated toad that dies in ire,
And quivers into fixedness !—On high
Raising the corpse, forth into th' moonlight air
The staggering murderer bears it silently,
Lays it on earth, sees the fix'd eye-ball glare,
And turns, affrighted, from the lifeless stare.
Ho ! fire the mine ! and let the house be rent

To atoms !—that dark guile may say to fear,
“ Ah, dire mischance ! mysterious accident !
Ah, would it were explain'd ! ah, would it were ! ”
Up, up, the rushing, red volcano went,
And wide o'er earth, and heav'n, and ocean flash'd
A torrent of earth-lightning sky-ward sent ;
O'er heav'n, earth, sea, the dread explosion crash'd ;
Then, clattering far, the downward fragments dash'd.
Roar'd the rude sailor o'er th' illumined sea,
“ Hell is in Scotland ! ” Shudder'd Roslin's hall,
Low'd the scar'd heifer on the distant lea,
Trembled the city, shriek'd the festival,
Paused the pale dance from his delighted task,
Quaked every masker of the splendid ball ;
Raised hands, unanswer'd questions seem'd to ask ;
And there was one who lean'd against the wall,
Close pressing to her face, with hands convulsed, her
mask.

And night was *after* that, but *blessed* night
Was never more ! for thrilling voices cried
To th' dreaming sleep, on th' watcher's pale affright,
“ Who murder'd Darnley ? Who the match applied ?
Did Hepburn murder Darnley ? ”—“ Fool ! ” replied
Accents responsive, fang'd with scorpion sting,
In whispers faint, while all was mute beside,
“ 'Twas the Queen's husband that did kill the King ! ”
And o'er the murderer's soul swept horror's freezing
wing.

Rhin. Terrific, but untrue!—*Have* such things
been?

Thy looks say ay! and dire are they to me.
Unhappy King! and more unhappy Queen!
But who the murderer?

Both. What is that to thee?
Think'st thou *I* kill'd him? Come but near my
chain,
Thou base suspecter of scathed misery!
And I will dash the links into thy brain,
And lay thee (champion of the can't-be-free!)
There, for thine insolence—never to rise again.

[*He faints.*]

Rhin. Alas! how far'st thou now? Darkness hath
chased
The dreadful paleness from thy face; thine eye,
Upturn'd, displays its white; thy cheek is laced
With quivering tortuous folds; thy lip, awry,
Snarls, as thou tear'st the straw; the speechless storm
Frowns on thy brow, where drops of agony
Stand thick and beadlike; and, while all thy form
Is crumpled with convulsion, threat'ningly
Thou breathest, smiting th' air, and writhing like a
worm.

Both. Treason in *arms*!—Sirs, ye are envious all.
To Mary's marriage did ye not consent?
Do you deny your signatures—this scrawl
Of your vile names? True, I do not repent

That I divorced my wife to wed the Queen ;
True, I hate Mar ; true, I scorn Huntley's bawl ;
True, I am higher now than I have been—
And will remain so, though your heads should fall.
Craig, of the nasal twang, who pray'st so well !
Glencairn, of th' icy eye, and tawny hide !
If I am prouder than the Prince of Hell,
Are ye all meanness that ye have no pride ?
My merit is my crime. I love my sword,
And that high sin for which the angels fell ;
But still agrees my action with my word ;
That yours does *not* so, let rebellion tell.
Submit ! or perish here ! or elsewhere—by the cord.

My comrades, whose brave deeds my heart attests,
Be jocund !—But, ah, see their trembling knees !
Their *eyes* are vanquish'd—not by th' tossing crests,
But by yon rag, the pestilence of the breeze,
Painted with villanous horror ! In their breasts
Ardour and manliness make now with fear
A shameful treaty, casting all behests
That honour loves, into th' inglorious rear.
By heav'n, their cowardice hath sold us here !
Ha ! dastards, terror-quell'd as by a charm,
What ! steal ye from the field ?—My sword for thee,
Mary ! and courage for his cause ! *this* arm
Shall now decide the contest !—Can it be ?
Did Lindsay claim the fight ?—and still lives he ?

He lives, and I to say it. Hell's black night
 Lower'd o'er my soul, and Darnley scowl'd on me,
 And Mary would not let her coward fight,
 But bade him barter all for infamy !
 Dishonour'd, yet unburied ! Morton's face
 Wrinkled with insult ; while, with cover'd brow,
 Bravest Kirkaldy mourn'd a foe's disgrace ;
 And Murray's mean content was mutter'd low.
 Pale, speechless Mary wept, almost ashamed
 Of him she mourn'd. Flash'd o'er my cheek the
 glow
 Of rage against myself ; and undefamed,
 Worse than my reputation, and not slow,
 I left my soul behind, and fled in wordless woe.

Then ocean was my home, and I became
 Outcast of human kind, making my prey
 The pallid merchant ; and my wither'd name
 Was leagued with spoil, and havock, and dismay ;
 Fear'd, as the lightning fiend, on steed of flame—
 The Arab of the sky. And from that day
 Mary I saw no more. Sleepless desire
 Wept ; but *she* came not, even in dreams, to say,
 (Until this hour,) “ All hopeless wretch, expire ! ”
Rhin. A troubled dream thy changeful life hath
 been
 Of storm and splendour. Girt with awe and power,
 A Thane illustrious ; married to a queen ;

Obeÿ'd, loved, flatter'd ; blasted in an hour ;
A homicide ; a homeless fugitive
O'er earth, to thee a waste without a flower ;
A pirate on the ocean, doom'd to live
Like the dark osprey ! Could Fate sink thee lower ?
Defeated, captured, dungeon'd, in this tower
A raving maniac !

Both. Ah, what next ? the gloom
Of rayless fire eternal, o'er the foam
Of torment-uttering curses, and the boom
That moans through horror's everlasting home !
Woe, without hope—immortal wakefulness—
The brow of tossing agony—the gloam
Of flitting fiends, who, with taunts pitiless,
Talk of lost honour, rancorous, as they roam
Through night, whose vales no dawn shall ever
bless !—

Accursèd who outlives his fame !—Thou scene
Of my last conflict, where the captive's chain
Made me acquainted with despair ! serene
Ocean, thou mock'st my bitterness of pain,
For thou, too, saw'st me vanquish'd, yet not slain !
O, that my heart's-blood had but stain'd the wave,
That I had plunged never to rise again,
And sought in thy profoundest depths a grave !

White billow ! know'st thou Scotland ? did thy wet
Foot ever spurn the shell on her loved strand ?

There hast thou stoop'd, the sea-weed grey to fret—
Or glaze the pebble with thy crystal hand ?
I am of Scotland. Dear to me the sand
That sparkles where my infant days were nursed !
Dear is the vilest weed of that wild land
Where I have been so happy, so accursed !
Oh, tell me, hast thou seen my lady stand
Upon the moonlight shore, with troubled eye,
Looking t'wards Norway ? did'st thou gaze on her ?
And did she speak of one far thence, and sigh ?
O, that I were with thee a passenger
To Scotland, the bless'd Thule, with a sky
Changeful, like woman ! would, oh, would I were !
But vainly hence my frantic wishes fly.
Who reigns at Holyrood ? Is Mary there ?
And does she sometimes shed, for him once loved, a
tear ?

Farewell, my heart's divinity ! To kiss
Thy sad lip into smiles of tenderness ;
To worship at that stainless shrine of bliss ;
To meet th' elysium of thy warm caress ;
To be the prisoner of thy tears ; to bless
Thy dark eye's weeping passion ; and to hear
The word, or sigh, soul-toned, or accentless,
Murmur for one so vile, and yet so dear—
Alas ! 'tis mine no more !—Thou hast undone me, .
Fear !

Champion of Freedom, pray thee, pardon me
My laughter, if I now can laugh !—(in hell
They laugh not)—he who doth now address thee
Is Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell. Hark ! my knell !
The death-owl shrieks it. Ere I cease to fetch
These pantings for the shroud, tell me, O tell !
Believ'st thou God ?—Blow on a dying wretch,
Blow, wind that com'st from Scotland !—Fare-thee-
well !

The owl shrieks—I shall have no other passing-
bell.

Rhin. As from the chill, bright ice the sunbeam
flies,

So (but reluctant) life's last light retires
From the cold mirror of his closing eyes :
He bids the surge adieu !—falls back—expires !
No passing bell ? Yea, I that bell will be ;
Pale night shall hear the requiem of my sighs ;
My woe-worn heart hath still some tears for thee ;
Nor will thy shade the tribute sad despise.
Brother, farewell !—Ah, yes !—no voice replies :
But my tears flow—albeit in vain they flow—
For him who at my feet so darkly sleeps ;
And Freedom's champion, with the locks of snow,
Now fears the form o'er which he sternly weeps.
An awful gloom upon my spirit creeps.
My ten years' comrade ! whither art thou fled ?
Thou art not here ! Thy lifeless picture keeps

Its place before me, while, almost in dread,
I shrink, yet gaze, and long to share thy bed.

*[He retires to a corner of the dungeon farthest
from the corpse, and there continues to gaze
upon it in silence.]*



L O V E.



To G. CALVERT HOLLAND, M.D., who, by his efforts in favour of Universal Education, is preparing better days for the England of my children, and a brighter futurity for the human race, I inscribe this Poem.

BOOK I.

What marvel, Laura, if thy minstrel shun
The peopled waste, the loneliness of crowds?
I love the streams, that mirror as they run

The voiceless clouds.

The stillness of Almighty Power is here,
And Solitude—the present Deity—
Throned on the hills that meet the bending sphere,

How silently !

O look around thee ! On those rocks sublime,
Th' impression of eternal feet is seen !
These mountains are the eldest-born of Time,

Still young and green !

What nobler home, what holier company
For Love and Thought, than forests and the heath,
Where life's Great Cause, in his sublimity,

Dwells lone as Death ?

What scene more fit than this, though wild and drear,
With Heav'n, the universal sea, above,
To prompt the song most sweet to lady's ear—
The lay of Love?

Hear'st thou the murmur of the living rill,
That ever seeks the valley, green and still,
Gliding from view, love-listening groves between,
And most melodious when it flows unseen?
What though, at times, the sun in wrath retire,
And o'er its course the clouds dissolve in fire?
Soon bend the skies in brighter beauty fair,
And see, where'er it flows, their image there.
Softly it steals beneath the lucid sky;
So, Love's lone stream steals to eternity.
How the flowers freshen where the waters glide,
And seem to listen to the limpid tide!
So bless'd is he whose life serenely flows,
Reflecting golden clouds, and many a rose.
He hears Heav'n's voice in every warbling grove,
And sees in every flower the smile of Love.

Love! eldest Muse! Time heard thine earliest lay
When light through Heaven led forth the new-born
day.

The stars, that give no accent to the wind,
Are golden odes and music to the mind;
So, passion's thrill is Nature's minstrelsy;
So, to the young heart, Love is poetry.

God of the soul ! illumination, caught
From thy bright glance, is energy to thought ;
And song, bereft of thee, is cold and tame,
The bard a cinder, uninstinct with flame.
But when the heart looks through the eyes of Love
On Nature's form, things lifeless breathe and move ;—
The dewy forest smiles, dim morning shakes
The rainbow from his plumage, music wakes
The dimpled ripple of the azure wave,
In fiery floods green hills their tresses lave,
And myriad flowers all bright'ning from the dews,
Day's earth-born stars, their golden beams effuse :
Transported passion bids rocks, floods, and skies
Burst into song, while her delighted eyes
To all they see their own rich hues impart ;
And the heart's language speaks to every heart.

Love, 'twas my heart that named thee ! sweetest word
Here, or in highest Heav'n, pronounced or heard !
Whether by seraph near the throne above,
Or soul-sick maiden in the vernal grove,
Or matron, with her first-born on her knee,
Or, sweeter, lisp'd by rose-lipp'd infancy !
Yes, Love, my heart did name thee ! not because
Thy mandate gave the bright-hair'd comet laws ;
Nor that thy hand, in good almightyest, showers
The overblooming, fiery-petall'd flowers
Wide o'er the fields of hyacinthine Heav'n ;
But that to me thy richest smile hath giv'n

Bliss, tried in pain. So, 'mid my rosy boys,
In joy and grief, I sing thy griefs and joys.

Bless'd is the hearth, when daughters gird the
fire,

And sons, that shall be happier than their sire
Who sees them crowd around his evening chair,
While Love and Hope inspire his wordless pray'r.

O from their home paternal may they go,
With little to unlearn, though much to know !

Them may no poison'd tongue, no evil eye
Curse for the virtues that refuse to die ;
The generous heart, the independent mind,
Till truth, like falsehood, leaves a sting behind !

May temperance crown their feast, and friendship
share !

May pity come, Love's sister spirit, there !

May they shun baseness, as they shun the grave !

May they be frugal, pious, humble, brave !

Sweet peace be theirs, the moonlight of the breast,
And occupation, and alternate rest ;

And, dear to care and thought, the rural walk !

Theirs be no flower that withers on the stalk,
But roses cropp'd, that shall not bloom in vain,
And Hope's bless'd sun, that sets to rise again !

Be chaste their nuptial bed, their home be sweet,
Their floor resound the tread of little feet ;

Bless'd beyond fear and fate, if bless'd by thee,
And heirs, O Love, of thine eternity !

Young Devotee, whose fond and guileless heart
Feels, for the first time, Love's delicious smart !
Now—while the sun his crimson radiance showers,
And stars the green night of the woods with flowers,
That hung, like rubies, on each trembling thorn,
Outshine the myriad opals of the morn—
Now take thy lonely walk of ecstasy ;
The sun is in the west, young Devotee !
Or, wilt thou seek thine idol proud and fair,
To throw thee at her feet and worship there
The might serene of beauty on her throne,
And feel her power almighty o'er thy own ?
Then—as a cloud, athwart the desert cast,
Relieves the wretch who tracks the sand aghast—
If but a ringlet tremble on her cheek,
Or, if her lips but move and seem to speak,
Or, evening brighten in her eye divine,
How sweet a pain, young Devotee, is thine !

But deeper transport far, and sweeter pain,
For Love's victorious votaries remain.
O may'st thou ne'er, like hapless Tasso, know
Ambitious Love's excess of maddening woe !
But long, and long thy bride and truth's to be,
May beauty smile or weep in bliss with thee ;
Nor live, like sad Miranda, to deplore, ^(a)
Where savage grandeur crowns some alien shore,
Connubial widowhood in hated arms,
And curse, with every kiss, her fatal charms !

Oh, bless'd, who drinks the bliss that Hymen
yields,
And plucks life's roses in his quiet fields !
Though in his absence hours seem lengthen'd years,
His presence hallows separation's tears.
Oh ! clasp'd in dreams, for his delay'd return
Fond arms are stretch'd, and speechless wishes
burn !

Love o'er his fever'd soul sheds tears more sweet
Than angel's smiles, when parted angels meet :
To him no fabled paradise is given ;
His very sorrows charm, and breathe of heav'n.
And soon the fairest form that walks below
Shall bless the name of parent in her woe ;
Soon o'er her babe shall breathe a mother's pray'r,
And kiss its father's living picture there,
While the young stranger on life's dangerous way
Turns with a smile his blue eye to the day.
But where shall poesy fit colours choose
To paint the matron morning sprinkling dews
O'er half-blown flowers, that pay their early breath
In tribute to the Lord of life and death,
Who bids the lucid blush of nature glow
Till angels see another Heaven below,
Dimples the deep with every breeze that blows,
And gives its sweet existence to the rose ?

Maternal Love, best type of heavenly bliss !
Thou show'st the joys of brighter worlds in this,

When sons and daughters rush to thy embrace,
And Love is painted on each rosy face !
E'en in the vale of poverty and gloom,
Thy joys, like heath-flowers on the moorland, bloom,
And o'er thy child of ignorance thy sigh
Is wordless pray'r, and not unheard on high.
But crown'd with knowledge, best Instructress thou !
Tuition smiles seraphic on thy brow.
What though Contempt, with simpering sneer aside,
Deems all thy teaching labour misapplied ?
What though around thee move the slaves of gain
Who oft inflict, but seldom pity pain ;
Still pointing, as they shake the sapient head,
At talent's rags, and learning's sons half-fed ?
Thy children's worth, maturing day by day,
Thy children's glory, shall thy cares repay ;
And they shall bless thine age with accents kind,
E'en as his daughter nursed Ferdoosi blind,
When three times thirty years and ten had shed
Illustrious Winter on his honour'd head.
A soldier, Charles shall Wolfe's renown transcend,
Proud to avenge his country, or defend.
John, grave in childhood, on the soul shall shower
The Gospel-dews, with renovating power ;
Sublime instruction from his lips shall flow,
And Mercy's antidote for sin and woe.
Matilda's name shall shine, admired afar,
In Fame's blue night, a new, and lovely star :

May she not hope for glory's bright caress,
Fair, young, ingenious, and a Britoness ?
May she not hope, where all can judge and feel ?
Where wealth crowns virtue, genius, and O'Neil ?
Where Opie's pages truth and joy impart ?
Where Owenson and Edgeworth paint the heart ?
Where, crown'd with terror, Radcliffe rears her throne,
A dread Medea, but a guiltless one ;
And tragic Baillie stole from Nature's side
The mantle left by Shakspeare, when he died ?
But better bliss shall glowing Mary prove,
Bless'd in a faithful husband's fondest love.
Then each sweet grandchild on thy heart shall rise
A new existence, rich in ecstasies ;
And, mother's mother ! a new name, be given
To thee, a Heav'n to come, and memory's Heav'n.
Peace, like an infant, slumbering at thy feet,
Thy day shall melt into the evening sweet ;
And while elysian breezes fan thy breast,
Thou shalt sink gently, with a smile, to rest ;
And many a relative, and many a friend,
And many a tear, shall note thy gentle end.

When Cook, a sailor's boy, with aching eye,
Gazed from the deep on oft-climb'd Roseberry, ^(b)
While, trembling as she listen'd to the blast,
His anxious parent sea-ward wishes cast,
And fervent pray'r was mute, but not suppress'd,
Though love was resignation in her breast ;

Why did'st thou not—thou happiest name of joy !
Bid her cheer'd spirit see that deathless boy
Bear round the globe Britannia's flag unfurl'd,
And from th' abyss unknown call forth a world ?

Where death-freed wanderers tread celestial shores,
And silence, in eternal light, adores !
Spirit of Jones ! to earth-born Angels tell
What sweet instructress taught her child so well,
What earthly form is likest theirs above,
And, in thy teacher, bless Maternal Love !

When Watts' pale mother, o'er her thoughtful child,
In hope and fear alternate wept and smiled,
And bore privation that his mind might feed,
Dare greatest things, and, greatly wise, succeed ;—
Though rapture mingled with her bosom's smart,
And sweetest visions tranquillized her heart,
She could not see him give Improvement birth,
And with his vapoury lever lift the earth.
E'en the bright promise in the parent's soul
Mistook and bless'd a portion for the whole ;
And Love, for once, a timid prophet, told
Scarce half the worth that truth-taught Time unroll'd.

In Severn's vale, a wan and moonstruck boy
Sought, by the daisy's side, a pensive joy ;
Held converse with the sea-birds as they pass'd,
And strange and dire communion with the blast,
And read in sunbeams, and the starry sky,
The golden language of eternity.

Age saw him, and look'd sad ; the young men smiled ;
And wondering maidens shunn'd his aspect wild.
But He—the ever kind, the ever wise !
Who sees through fate, with omnipresent eyes,
Hid from the mother, while she bless'd her son,
The woes of genius, and of Chatterton.

What child is hopeless in his mother's sight ?
Say, then, O thou, whose very tears delight,
Walks there a wretch, displeased, amid thy flowers,
Who, while thy smile illumines life's saddest hours,
With serpent hiss malign thy worth denies,
And views thy transports with disdainful eyes ?

There are, sweet power ! who blame thy gentle
rule,
And call thy hearth of happiness the school
Where manly hearts, by hate coerced in vain,
First learn to like, and then to wear a chain.
Cold, but not wise, a partial task is theirs,
To blame the rich soil for the weed it bears.
What power invincible, on earth, in heav'n
Like Love can strive with fate, like Love hath
striven ?

Thou only spark in man that is divine !
If thine is transport, Stoic strength is thine ;
And calmly can'st thou smile on danger's form,
Like rosy summer on the thunder-storm.
Thine is the hand to act, the heart to dare,
The soul to feel, the fortitude to bear,

The breast that softly glows, or bravely bleeds,
The voice that calls to fame, the step that leads ;
And time-tried truth and constancy, that prove
He is no wretch who hath no friend but Love.
Too oft hath man, his dream of splendour o'er,
Seen his friend's dog assail him at the door,
But often, too, when hope within him dies,
Love clasps him close, though hope despairs and flies !
So, when o'er Eden waved the fiery brand,
Our exiled parents wander'd, hand in hand,
And left, with many a sigh, th' elysian scene.
A joyless, widow'd bed where bliss had been,
A solitude of beauty, vainly fair,
" A flower unseen, that scents the desert air :"
Love, and sweet tears, for Eden lost suffice ;
Though Eden was no longer Paradise ;
Oft looking back, they went, but side by side—
The world before them, weeping Love their guide.

Yes, Fortune's faithless wrongs may turn to steel
The flattering foe, that well can feign to feel ;
The desperate heart may lean on torture's thorn,
The sun be darkness to the eye forlorn ;
All may be hopeless gloom, around, above,
All, save thy quenchless smile, heroic Love !
Of this bear witness, Denbigh, and thou den,
Too oft the torturing home of hapless men,
Where Waller's Angel cheer'd him in the tomb, (c)
And smiled a twilight o'er his dungeon's gloom !

Bear witness, too, ye groves of Tankersley,
And thou, pure rill, whose sky-born melody
Warbles of heav'nly peace ! for ye beheld
(When Fanshawe sought, by Cromwell's sword com-
pell'd, (d)

His care-worn form beneath your shades to hide)
The mate of Honour by her husband's side !
She, when the iron pierced his soul, was near,
To bathe his aching fetters with a tear :
And, when her supplication broke his chain,
She kiss'd away the mem'ry of his pain,
And bade him strike, where Druid oaks aspire,
The love-taught Lusian's care-assuaging lyre.
O, sink not then, desponding slave of care !
Arise, be dreadless ! why should man despair ?
Lo, woman's love can plant the rock with flowers,
Gild Fate's black storm, when big with death it
lowers,

Make cowards brave, arm Pity's hand to slay,
And scathe Invasion's hordes in disarray !

Love ! when red Battle, o'er the stormy crest
Of free Helvetia, roll'd his eye unblest'd,
Thou heard'st thy sons on God and Freedom call,
Thou saw'st thy sons in Freedom's conflict fall.
The infant Tell, when that sad tale is told,
Lowers, with indignant front, his locks of gold,
Clangs his small drum, with despot-daring hand,
And half assumes his little wooden brand ;

Rage, wonder, grief, his guileless heart surprise,
And all the mother swells into his eyes.
Then, when th' horizon flamed—a flag of doom—
When pale affright heard breeze-born horrors boom,
When blazing hamlets spoke of havock near,
And beauty paid her hero with a tear,
What wonder, if the virgin helm'd her head,
Rush'd to the field with thundering volleys red,
And, by her lover's side, a martial form,
'Tower'd the Bellona of the battle-storm?
So, when around thy home war's banners fly,
And patriots on the threshold fight and die,
The Matron, then—her dreadless husband slain,
And dead the famish'd child, that lived in vain—
Climbs with Thalestrian port the leaguered wall,
Where death rides sulphury on the whirling ball,
Fires her loud tube, and on the fiends below
Shakes from her widow'd tresses shame and woe.

To scathe with dread th' Oppressor's cheek of flame,
To foil Death's gambler at his favourite game,
To soothe despair, and bid e'en anguish please,
These are thy triumphs, mighty Conqueror, these !
Vaulting Ambition hesitates to meet
Thy powerful glance ; War crouches at thy feet.
When troubles rise, when peril's direst form,
Frowning on man, adds darkness to the storm ;
Then—while, in spite of shame, the bravest fear—
Affection stands her babes and husband near,

Endures and dares, for him, and them alone,
And, in their danger, quite forgets her own.
When Virtue dies, in pallid Want's embrace
Not friendless, though abandon'd by the base ;
Then o'er the grave from which all flatterers fly,
Love sheds a tear which kingdoms could not buy.
And—as the April sunbeam melts the snow,
Till peeps the golden flower that slept below—
Thy look can charm the Fiend beneath whose eye
All joys, but thine, and bless'd Religion's, die,
The king of woes, pride-humbling Poverty.



BOOK II.

O faithful Love, by Poverty embraced !
Thy heart is fire, amid a wintry waste ;
Thy joys are roses, born on Hecla's brow ;
Thy home is Eden, warm amid the snow :
And she, thy mate, when coldest blows the storm,
Clings then most fondly to thy guardian form ;
E'en as thy taper gives intensest light,
When o'er thy bow'd roof darkest falls the night.
Oh, if thou e'er hast wrong'd her, if thou e'er
From those mild eyes hast caused one bitter tear
To flow unseen, repent, and sin no more !
For richest gems, compared with her, are poor ;

Gold, weigh'd against her heart, is light—is vile ;
And when thou sufferest, who shall see her smile ?
Sighing, ye wake, and sighing sink to sleep,
And seldom smile, without fresh cause to weep ;
(Scarce dry the pebble, by the wave dash'd o'er,
Another comes, to wet it as before ;)
Yet, while in gloom your freezing day declines,
How fair the wintry sunbeam when it shines !
Your foliage, where no summer leaf is seen,
Sweetly embroiders earth's white veil with green ;
And your broad branches, proud of storm-tried
 strength,
Stretch to the winds in sport their stalwart length,
And calmly wave, beneath the darkest hour,
The ice-born fruit, the frost-defying flower.
Let Luxury, sickening in profusion's chair,
Unwisely pamper his unworthy heir,
And, while he feeds him, blush and tremble too !
But, Love and Labour, blush not, fear not you !
Your children, (splinters from the mountain's side,)
With rugged hands, shall for themselves provide.
Parent of valour, cast away thy fear !
Mother of men, be proud without a tear !
While round your hearth the woe-nursed virtues
 move,
And all that manliness can ask of Love ;
Remember Hogarth, and abjure despair, (e)
Remember Arkwright, and the peasant Clare.

Burns, o'er the plough, sung sweet his wood-notes wild,
And richest SHAKSPEARE was a poor man's child.
Sire, green in age, mild, patient, toil-inured,
Endure thine evils, as thou hast endured.
Behold thy wedded daughter, and rejoice !
Hear hope's sweet accents in a grandchild's voice !
See Freedom's bulwarks in thy sons arise,
And Hampden, Russell, Sidney, in their eyes !
And should some new Napoleon's curse subdue
All hearths but thine, let him behold them too,
And timely shun a deadlier Waterloo !

Northumbrian vales ! ye saw, in silent pride,
The pensive brow of lowly Akenside,
When, poor, yet learn'd, he wander'd young and free,
And felt within the strong divinity.
Scenes of his youth, where first he woo'd the Nine,
His spirit still is with you, vales of Tyne !
As when he breathed, your blue-bell'd paths along,
The soul of Plato into British song.

Born in a lowly hut an infant slept,
Dreamful in sleep, and, sleeping, smiled or wept :
Silent the youth—the man was grave and shy :
His parents loved to watch his wondering eye :
And, lo ! he waved a prophet's hand, and gave,
Where the winds soar, a pathway to the wave !
From hill to hill bade air-hung rivers stride,
And flow through mountains with a conqueror's
pride :

O'er grazing herds, lo ! ships suspended sail,
And Brindley's praise hath wings in every gale !

The worm came up to drink the welcome shower ;
The redbreast quaff'd the rain-drop in the bower ;
The flaskering duck through freshen'd lilies swam ;
The bright roach took the fly below the dam ;
Ramp'd the glad colt, and cropp'd the pensile spray ;
No more in dust uprose the sultry way ;
The lark was in the cloud ; the woodbine hung
More sweetly o'er the chaffinch while he sung ;
And the wild rose, from every dripping bush,
Beheld on silvery Sheaf the mirror'd blush ;
When calmly seated on his pannier'd ass,
Where travellers hear the steel hiss as they pass.
A milkboy, sheltering from the transient storm,
Chalk'd, on the grinder's wall, an infant's form ;
Young Chantrey smiled ; no critic praised or blamed ;
And golden promise smiled, and thus exclaim'd—
“Go, child of genius ! rich be thine increase ;
Go—be the Phidias of the second Greece !”

Greece ! thou art fallen, by luxury o'erthrown,
Not vanquish'd by the Man of Macedon !
For ever fall'n ! and Sculpture fell with thee.
But from the ranks of British poverty
A glory hath burst forth, and matchless powers
Shall make th' eternal grace of Sculpture ours.
The eternal grace ? Alas ! the date assign'd
To works, call'd deathless, of creative mind,

Is but a speck upon the sea of days ;
And frail man's immortality of praise,
A moment to th' eternity of Time,
That is, and was, and shall be the sublime,
The unbeginning, the unending sea,
Dimensionless as God's infinity !
England, like Greece, shall fall, despoil'd, defaced.
And weep, the Tadmor of the watery waste.
The wave shall mock her lone and manless shore ;
The deep shall know her freighted wealth no more ;
And unborn wanderers, in the future wood
Where London stands, shall ask where London
stood ?

As melt the clouds at summer's feet sublime,
The burning forests of noon's fiery clime ;
So, art and power, with freedom, melt away
In long prosperity's unclouded ray.
Let soul-sick minstrels sing of myrtle bowers,
And diadem the brow of Love with flowers,
Matured where earth brings forth the rack and
scourge,

And ruthless tortures languid labours urge.
Slaves ! where ye toil for tyrants, Love is not :
Love's noblest temple is the freeman's cot !
What though each blast its humble thatch uprear ?
Bold shall the tyrant be that enters there.
Look up and see, where, throned on alpine snow,
Valour disdains the bondsman's vales below :

So, Love, companion of the wolf, may roam,
And in the desert find a boundless home ;
But will not bow the knee to pomp and pride,
Where slaves of slaves with hate and fear reside.
What are the glories that Oppression throws
Around his vainly-guarded throne of woes ;
The marbles of divinity, and all
That decks pale Freedom's pomp of funeral ?
Let Grandeur's home, o'er subject fields and floods,
Rise, like a mountain clad in wintry woods,
And columns tall, of marble wrought, uphold
The spiry roof, and ceilings coved in gold ;
But better than the palace and the slave
Is Nature's cavern that o'erlooks the wave,
Rock-paved beneath, and granite-arch'd above,
If Independence sojourn there with Love !

Star of the heart ! O still on Britain smile,
Of old thy chosen, once thy favour'd isle,
And by the nations, envious and unblest'd,
Call'd thine and Freedom's Eden in the west !
Then hymns to Love arose from every glen,
Each British cottage was thy temple then.
But now what Demon blasts thy happiest land,
And bids thine exiled offspring crowd the strand ;
Or pens in festering towns the victim swain,
And sweeps thy cot, thy garden, from the plain ?
Lo ! where the pauper idles in despair,
Thy Eden droops, for blight and dearth are there !

And, like an autumn floweret, lingering late,
Scarce lives a relic of thy happier state—
A wreck of peace and love, with sadness seen,
That faintly tells what England once hath been !
Amid coeval orchards, grey with age,
Screen'd by memorial elms from winter's rage.
Scarce stands a shed, where virtue loves to be,
A hut of self-dependent poverty,
Where want pines proudly, though distress and fear
Stain thy mute votary with too sad a tear ;
And yet I feel thine altar still is here—
Here, where thy Goldsmith's too prophetic strain,
'Mid the few ruins that attest thy reign,
Deplored the sinking hind, the desecrated plain.

Alas, sweet Auburn ! since thy bard bewail'd
“ Thy bowers, by Trade's unfeeling sons assail'd,”
How many a village, sweet like thee, hath seen
The once-bless'd cottage joyless on the green !
Now e'en “ the last of all thy harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain,”
Now “ e'en that feeble, solitary thing ”
Hath ceased “ to bend above the plashy spring ; ”
And her fall'n children breathe their curses deep,
Far from that home of which they think and weep.
Where myriad chimneys wrap their dens in shade,
They rob the night to ply their sickly trade,
And weekly come, with subjugated soul,
Degraded, lost, to ask the workhouse dole.

Slow seems the gloomy Angel, slow, to bring
His opiate cold to hopeless suffering ;
And, when in death's long sleep their eyes shall close,
Not with their fathers shall their dust repose,
By hoary playmates of their boyhood laid
Where never corpse-thief plied his horrid trade :
Not in the village church-yard, lone and green,
Around their graves, shall weeping friends be seen ;
But surly haste shall delve their shallow bed,
And hireling hands shall lay them with the dead,
Where chapmen bargain on the letter'd stone,
Or stumble, careless, o'er the frequent bone.

How long, O Love ! shall loveless Avarice sow
Despair and sloth, and ask why curses grow ?
Or dost thou give thy choicest gifts in vain,
And mock with seeming good the heir of pain ?
God ! where thy image dwells must sorrow dwell ?
Must Famine make thy earth her hopeless hell ?
Did thy uplifted axe, Napoleon, find,
In manless deserts, barren as the wind,
Food ? or, when black depopulation shed
Hunger o'er Moscow, were Caul's armies fed ?
Why do the clouds cast fatness on the hills ?
Why pours the mountain his unfailing rills ?
Why teems with flowers the vale—with life the sky ?
Why weds with loveliness utility ?
Why woos the foodful plain, in blessing bless'd,
The sons of labour to her virgin breast ?

Why is the transcript of thy Heav'n so fair,
If man, poor victim ! lives but to despair ?

O thou, whose brightening wing is plumed with light,
At once that pinion's beauty and its might—
Thou true Prometheus, by whose lore were taught
To fix on adamant the fleeting thought,
Star-ruling science, calculation strong,
The march of letters, and th' array of song !
Twin-born with Liberty, and child of Love,
Woe-conquering Knowledge ! when wilt thou remove
Th' opprobrium of the earth—the chain'd in soul ?
When wilt thou make man's deadliest sickness whole ?
Lo ! while our "bearers of glad tidings" roam
To farthest lands, we pine in gloom at home !
And still, in thought, I hear one whirlwind past ! (f)
Still hurtles in my soul the dying blast,
The echo of a hell of sound, that jarr'd
The ear of Heav'n, as when his angels warr'd !
Terrific drama ! and the actors men ;
But such may shuddering earth ne'er see again !
Unlike her children, less than fiends or more !
And one, of scarcely human grandeur, bore (g)
World-shaking thunder on his sightless wing ;
But, when thy spear assail'd his brandish'd sting,
He waned to half a Cæsar. Him the frown
Of ruin dash'd beneath thy axle down ;
Then horror shook him from his deathlike sleep ;
Then vengeance cast him o'er the troubled deep ;

And, on the winds of retribution hurl'd,
His demon-shadow still appals the world !
When, Knowledge, when will mortals learn thy lore ?
They plant thy tree, and water it with gore.
When wilt thou—when thy power almighty prove,
And bind the sons of men in chains of Love ?
Rise, hope of nations, and assuage their ills !
This wills thy Teacher—this thy Parent wills.
For this, Love taught thy childhood in her bower,
And bade thee syllable her words of power,
Till brighten'd on thy brow sublimest thought ;
And she, thy teacher, wonder'd as she taught.
O rise and reign, bless'd Power, that lov'st to bless ;
Queen of all worlds, best name of mightiness !
Thy book of life to Labour's children give :
Let Destitution learn to read, and live ;
And Independence, smiling on thy brow,
Sing hymns to Love and Plenty, o'er the plough !
Thy kingdom come ! on earth let discord cease ;
Come thy long Sabbath of bless'd love and peace !
No more let Famine, from her idle hell,
Unwonted guest, with Love and Labour dwell,
Till death stares ghastly-wild in living eyes,
And at Pride's bloated feet his feeder dies,
While Luxury, hand in hand with Ruin, moves
To do the Devil's work, and call it Love's.
What whirlwind, in his dread magnificence,
What Samiel blasts, like hopeless indolence ?

And man, when active most, and govern'd best,
Hath ills enough, insatiate to molest
His fragile peace—some strong in evil will,
But weak in act ; and others arm'd to kill,
Or swift to wound ;—Revenge, with venomous eyes :
Distrust, beneath whose frown affection dies ;
Scorn, reptile Scorn, that hate's the eagle's wing ;
Mean Envy's grubs, that stink, and long to sting ;
Mischance, Disease, Detraction's coward dart,
And the long silence of the broken heart ;
Nor only these. Tradition is the sigh
Of one who hath no hope ; and history
Bears—like a river deep, tumultuous, wide—
Gloom, guilt, and woe, on his eternal tide.
Nor need we read of regal wrath and hate,
Troy lost by Love and army-scatt'ring Fate.
The humblest hamlet's annals wake a sigh ;
And could yon cot, hoar with antiquity,
Relate what deeds within it have been done,
What hopeless suffering there hath cursed the sun,
The tale might draw down Pride's parch'd cheek
severe,
From Power's hard eye, e'en Pluto's iron tear.

NOTES.

(a) *Nor live, like sad Miranda, to deplore.*

“Charlevoix tells an affecting story of the fate of the garrison of the fort Santi Spiritûs, which, though it has the air of romance, is not incredible. Mangora, Prince of the Timbuez (an Indian nation in the neighbourhood of the fort) becoming enamoured of Lucy Miranda, a Spanish lady, the wife of Sebastian Hurtado, (one of the principal officers of the fort,) in order to obtain possession of her, laid a plot for the destruction of the garrison. Taking advantage of the absence of Hurtado, who was detached with another officer, named Ruiz Moschera, and fifty soldiers, to collect provisions, he placed four thousand men in a marsh, and went, with thirty others, loaded with refreshments, to the gates of the fort, which were readily opened for their admittance. Lara, the Spanish governor, in token of gratitude, gave them an entertainment; at the close of which, late at night, Mangora giving directions to his attendants to set fire to the magazines of the fort, the four thousand men, at this preconcerted signal, rushed in to the massacre. Most of the Spaniards were killed in their sleep. Lara, though wounded, espying the treacherous Prince, made up to him, and ran him through the body, but was intercepted in his flight, and killed. Not a living person was now left in the fort except Miranda, four other women, and as many children, all of whom were tied and brought before Siripa, the brother and successor of Mangora. At the sight of Miranda, he conceived for her the same passion which had proved fatal to his brother. On the return of Hurtado, Siripa ordered him to be tied to a tree, and there shot to death with arrows. Miranda throwing herself at the feet of the tyrant, by her suppliant charms procured her husband's release. The Indian indulged them in a restricted intercourse; but the boundaries being passed, he instantly condemned Miranda to the flames, and Hurtado to the torturing death which he had but lately escaped.”—*Holmes*.

(b) *When Cook, a sailor's boy, with aching eye,
Gazed from the deep on oft-climb'd Roseberry.*

Roseberry-Topping is a mountain near Stockesley in Yorkshire, from the summit of which there is a fine view over Cleveland, of Stockesley, Yarm, Stockton, Darlington, Hartlepool, the Tees, and the Ocean. It is a noted sea-mark.

(c) *Where Waller's Angel cheer'd him in the tomb—*

"I have been," says Sir William Waller, "in prison frequent. After above three years' imprisonment, and thus changed, as it were, from vessel to vessel, it pleased the Lord to restore me to my poor family. And here let me call to mind how much reason I had to be thankful for the great comfort experienced in the dear partner of my captivity. She came to me disguised in mean apparel, when I groaned in my bonds seven months, thinking it the duty of a wife to risk all things for the satisfaction of her husband. Much difficulty had she in coming, and was frequently on the brink of being discovered; but, at length, over mountains and unknown roads, sometimes with a guide and sometimes with none, she arrived at my prison; and she seemed, when she discovered herself to me, to be like the angel who appeared unto Saint Peter in like circumstances. She did not indeed bid my prison gates fly open, but, by her sweet converse and behaviour, she made those things seem light which were before heavy and scarce to be borne."—*Recollections of Sir William Waller, at the end of the poetry of Anna Matilda.* 12mo, 1788.

(d) *When Fanshawe sought, by Cromwell's sword compell'd—*

"On the 2nd September 1651, was fought the battle of Worcester, when the King being missing, and I hearing nothing of your father being dead or alive for three days, it is inexpressible in what affliction I was. I neither ate nor slept, but trembled at every motion I heard, expecting the fatal news, which at last came, that your father was a prisoner."

* * * * *

"Orders came, to carry my husband to Whitehall, where, in a little room, he was kept prisoner without speech of any, and in expectation of death; and at last he grew so ill, by the cold and hard

marches he had undergone, and being pent up in a room close and small, that the scurvy brought him to death's door. During the time of his imprisonment, I failed not, constantly, when the clock struck four in the morning, to go with a dark lanthorn in my hand, all alone and on foot, from my lodgings in Chancery Lane, at my cousin Young's, to Whitehall, by the entry that went out of King Street into the Bowling Green. There I would go under the window, and call him softly. He, excepting the first time, never failed to come at the first call. Thus we talked together; and sometimes I was so wet, that the rain went in at my neck, and out at my heels."

* * * * *

"In March we went with our three children into Yorkshire. There my husband translated the *Lusiad* of Camoens. We lived a harmless country life, and our house and park of Tankersley are very pleasant and good."

* * * * *

"At Wallingford House the office was kept, at which they gave passes for going abroad. In order to follow my husband, I went there to get one, dressed in as plain a way and speech as I could devise, (leaving my maid at the gate, who was a much finer gentlewoman than myself.) With as ill a mien and tone as I could, I told a fellow that I found in the office, that I desired a pass for Paris to go to my husband. Woman, says he, what is your husband, and what is your name? Sir, said I, with many curtsies, he is a merchant, and his name is Harrison. Well, replied he, it will cost you a crown. That is a large sum for me, said I; but pray put in my man, my maid, and three children; all which he immediately did, telling me that a Malignant would give him five pounds for such a pass. I thanked him kindly, and went away to my lodgings, where, with a pen, I made the great H into FF, the two R's into W, the I into S, the H and O into A, and the N into W, so completely, that no one could find out the change. With all speed I hired a barge, and that night, at six o'clock, I was at Gravesend; where the searcher came, who knowing me, demanded my pass, which they were obliged to keep for their discharge."

* * * * *

"On the 15th June 1666, my husband was taken sick with a disorder like unto an ague, but it turned out to be a malignant

inward fever, of which he lay until the 26th of the same month." — "O all powerful Lord God ! look down from heaven upon me, the most distressed wretch upon earth ! see my soul divided, my glory and my guide taken from me, and in him all my comfort in this life ! Have pity upon me, O Lord ! and speak peace to my disquieted soul, which, without thy support, cannot sustain itself ! Behold me, O Lord ! with five children, a distressed family, without friends, without counsel, out of my own country, without any means of returning with my wretched family to my own country, now at war with most parts of Christendon !" — *MS. Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe.*

(e) *Remember Hogarth, and abjure despair.*

This great painter was bound apprentice to an engraver of arms and silver plate, in 1698. It was not until 1720 that he was enabled to set up in business for himself ; and his first employment was to engrave coats of arms and shop bills.

(f) *And still, in thought, I hear one whirlwind past.*

The French Revolution.

(g) *And one, of scarcely human grandeur, bore
World-shaking thunder on his sightless wing ;*

Napoleon, who, when these lines were written, was a prisoner at St. Helena.



THE LETTER.



A tale of tears I dedicate
 'To him—the wise, the good, the great—
 Who wrote, while raged the factious storm,
 Our Bill of long-delay'd Reform.
 Oh, if my song, when I am dust,
 May hope to please the meek and just,
 Whoe'er thou art that lov'st true fame,
 From this page tear not LAMBTON'S name.

WHERE is the youth, for deeds immortal born, (^a)
 Who loved to whisper to th' embattled corn,
 And cluster'd woodbines, breathing o'er the stream,
 Endymion's beauteous passion for a dream?
 Why did he drop the harp from fingers cold,
 And sleep so soon with demigods of old?
 Oh, who so well could sing Love's joys and pains?
 He lived in melody, as if his veins
 Pour'd music : from his lips came words of fire,
 The voice of Greece, the tones of Homer's lyre.
 But me no guide, through academic shade,
 Led to the cell where glory's spoils are laid ;
 And shall my hand, for joyous task unmeet,
 Presume, O Love ! to scatter at thy feet,

Instead of roses, nightshade ; and instead
Of fragrance, chaplets gather'd from the dead ?
Self-taught and ill, my notes uncouth I try,
And chant my rugged English ruggedly,
To gloomy themes. Yet, sick with hope deferr'd,
I hear a voice, though mournful, proudly heard ;
And I have planted on my destined tomb
A pensive tree, that bends in storm and gloom,
Unseen, unknown. Oh, when shall it repair,
In lonely moonlight, beautiful and sweet,
The weeping bough ? and flourish green and fair,
Where slighted maidens mourn, and ghosts of lovers
meet ?

Wild as the chainless air, or bird that wings
The blue above the clouds, and soaring sings
Blythe welcome to the dewy, fragrant morn,
Young Anna dwelt with health, the mountain-born,
Where, murmuring with the moorland bee, the Dearn
Leaps from his well, through heath and plummy fern,
Till, pleased with richer blossoms in the vale,
He checks his wave, and hears the milkmaid's tale.
There, light of heart, nor lonely, nor unseen,
She walk'd and sung, and talk'd and laugh'd between,
Paying, in raptures from her guileless breast,
The soul-felt tribute which pleased Heav'n likes
best ;

Or paused, on broomy banks to sit or kneel,
While hedge-side bluebells died beneath her heel.

Her brow, where gentlest beauty held high state,
Was vein-inlaid with azure, delicate
As tenderest leaf of shaded columbine
That bends beneath the love-sick eglantine ;
And, oh, she was the meekest maid of all
That ever stoop'd o'er alpine waterfall,
Or look'd up to the hills from valleys sweet,
Like Nature's primrose, dropp'd at Bretland's feet.
She loved, with virgin-love, a stately swain :
Unhappy passion ! though Charles loved again.
Fresh was his cheek, as evening's flowers, that furl'd
Their banners in the sun ; his locks outcurl'd
The finger'd hyacinth, outshone the down
On youngest morning's cheek, when, newly blown,
The maiden violet meekly views the south,
While the rich wallflower, in its early growth,
Prepares deep amber, for th' expecting eye
That sees in fading flowers eternity.
She wedded, high in hope and passion strong ;
Unhappy marriage ! for Charles loved not long ;
And, at the altar, dark she stood in light ;
Heav'n's swift fire there bereft her eyes of sight.
E'en as she turn'd preparing to withdraw,
Burst flash and crash, in overwhelming awe ;
And pale she stood, with sightless eyes upraised ;
And pale the bridegroom wax'd, as mute he gazed ;
And from the holy temple, sadly led,
A mourning bride she moved, with languish'd head,

To weep, benighted. The moon's gentle ray
Shone not to her, and, unperceived, the day
Died into darkness. But, with Love's soft speech,
And tones that knew the answering heart to reach,
Charles fondly strove her sorrow to beguile,
And drooping blindness slowly learn'd to smile.
Time eased her bosom of its hopeless sighs,
Till joy, at length, revisited her eyes ;
But they, doom'd ever " objectless to roll,"
Could bring no more the blue hills to the soul,
Or, with night's shadows, bid all gloom depart,
And paint life's morning faces on the heart.

Sad, then, it was, to see a form so fair,
In tears resign'd, though dark, not in despair.
Still on his bosom she could lean and weep,
And feign a dream of eyelids closed in sleep ;
Still, when with him she walked, at eve or morn,
She could inhale the odours of the thorn ;
And while she hung so helpless on his arm,
Dependence gave his words a double charm :
They fell like dew o'er violets on her ear,
Or like offended Love's forgiving tear
On man's warm breast. Yet, by the plaining rill,
The thought would rise, that flowers on every hill
Were beautiful to every eye but hers ;
That broom and hawthorn, and the armèd furze,
Bloom'd, vainly fair, beneath the sapphire sky.
Still waved the birch in memory's happy eye ;

Yet, made by vain regret more sadly sweet,
The hours return'd, when oft, with naked feet
And bare plunged arm, the trout or loach she took,
Where stones upturn'd perturb'd the shallow brook ;
Or, 'mid her sister Naiades of the dale,
Held forth the lizard by his golden tail
In childish wonder ; and an envious pang
Assail'd her weakness, if the echoes rang
With " Holiday !" proclaim'd in joyous cries ;
And little boys and girls, with upturn'd eyes,
Came whispering round her. But that selfish pain
Humbled its victim : soon she sought again
For joy in sorrow. True, she could not see
The wingless squirrel frisk from tree to tree,
The wren from twig to twig ; but she could hear
The Tartar cuckoo chase his vernal year,
The pewet wail, the starting redbreast sing,
And e'en the flutter of the warbler's wing,
When the bough bent beneath his sudden flight—
Though blind, not lonely in her changeless night ;
Then would she chide sad thoughts ; and o'er her cheek
A smile would steal, so gentle and so meek,
And her blue orbs, though rolling sightless, gleam'd
With such mild splendour, that, almost, she seem'd
In love with darkness, like the insect things
That hide the gorgeous ruby of their wings
In emerald gloom, beneath the greenwood tree,
And sleep, shade-loving hyacinth, with thee !

Yet would she tremble in her fearful joy,
As wan flowers droop when April frosts annoy.
She felt a sad foreboding in her heart,
A dread that, oft dismiss'd, would not depart.
Blind and beloved, she smiled through tears, resign'd ;
But, ah ! she fear'd to be despised and blind,
Yet scarce knew why ! Alas, her fears were true !
Soon, scorn'd, she droop'd—O say not hated too !
How oft doth Baseness to his victim say,
“Why should the wretch receive, who cannot pay ?”
Ne'er had Ingratitude his plea to seek,
And cowards love to trample on the weak ;
And still the helpless, when most aid they need,
Die of neglect, (sad ill !) and slowly bleed,
By drop and drop, in silent, lone distress,
Till the heart swoons into forgetfulness !

More seldom, day by day, Charles sooth'd her woe ;
He came, she dared not own, in haste to go ;
But she would sigh, and, with suspended breath,
Hear tones that were to her a dirge of death ;
Then, while they struck her heart and soul with blight,
Try to believe she had not heard aright.
Few were his questions, harsh were his replies,
And deeply in his heart he cursed her sighs,
And called his guilt misfortune. She became
A thing unmark'd—though seen, o'erlook'd : her name
Ceased to be heard—she vanish'd. Who inquired
If she were dead or living ? Undesired

Came such inquiries ; and one answer brief
Met them, half-utter'd. Hopeless, in her grief,
She sate in some dark corner, lone ; and there,
With restless lips, she mutter'd ceaseless pray'r,
Or sigh'd, unheard, " What will become of me ?"
But menial wrath, with vile indignity,
And vulgar curses on her helpless head,
Soon drove her to her unpartaken bed,
Through the long night of nights and days to weep,
Or start from slumb'rous dreams, but not to sleep.
Yet was her trust in God unshaken still,
And she endured, with meek-submitted will,
Her heavy sorrows ; nor of that worst pain,
Love unrequited, did she once complain.
Poor, sightless, trampled worm ! for him she pray'd
Who bade her droop, with none to soothe or aid ;
Her broken heart, already, quite forgave
Him whose stern coldness had prepared her grave ;
And Charles, by dying Anna unproved,
When most unworthy, seem'd the most beloved !
He, heartless wretch, and weak as base, made haste
Her bridal portion and his wealth to waste ;
And suddenly, when all was gone, assumed
Th' equestrian sword, and helmet sable-plumed.
Strong blew the gale that o'er the heaving main
Bore him to glory and embattled Spain ;
Where seldom thought he, 'mid conflicting arms,
Of hapless Anna's sad, deserted charms.

She to that house where want is fed by scorn,
Too weak to walk, by hireling hands was borne ;
And there she found, with pain her couch to tend,
A home, like that she left, without a friend.
There, hourly dying, she forgot her woe,
And smiled, with cheek of fire and lip of snow,
On visions of the past. They, sad no more,
Soothed her lone heart. Seem'd lovelier than of yore
Her buried joys ; and memory loved to gaze
On their pale sleep. She thought of other days,
When, with her Charles, (for still she called him hers,)
By Broad-Oak's ice-cold rill, or Gunthwaite's firs,
Through Cawthorne's bowers, or High-bridge wood
 she stray'd,
Lost in her love, a happy, trusting maid,
Where—while the jay, with freedom's pinion, shook
The bind-weed's blush-tinged bells into the brook—
Thrush answering thrush, piped sweet in fountain'd
 dell,
And she could see the birds that sung so well.

Meantime, dire fields were fought, and tidings came
That the scathed eagle fled on wings of shame :
Fight followed fight ; she listened fearfully
To every tale of death and victory ;
And oft and oft, all wan, she ask'd who fell,
Dreading to hear a name beloved too well.
Murmurs at length, then voices reach'd her bed ;
There was a letter from her Charles, they said.

For the last time, like one risen from the tomb,
She raised her feeble form : a transient bloom
Flush'd her fall'n cheek : with intermitting breath
She bent toward the messengers of death,
As shipwreck'd seamen listen t'wards the land.
She held, stretch'd forth, her agitated hand,
Expecting, not believing, propp'd in bed
On one lean arm, but less in hope than dread ;
With feeble shriek, she fell and tried to rise :
And strain'd the letter to her sightless eyes,
And kiss'd it o'er and o'er. But when she heard
The written words, she lay like death, nor stirr'd,
Grey tress, or wasted limb. " He told of flocks
With fleeces fine, and goatherds of the rocks,
And Spain's fandango, and the soft guitar,
That sounds o'er treeless wastes to love's bright star,
Calling the hind when day's warm task is done,
To meet the dark-eyed daughters of the sun.
He told of bayonets blood-incarnadined,
Of distant battles booming on the wind,
Of foodless marches, and the all-day fight,
And horrid rest among the dead at night.
Last named he servile servants of base ends,
But call'd by him his dear and absent friends ;"
For they had pamper'd oft his mind diseased,
Fed on his riot, and with poison pleased.

And was this all ? was there no postscript ?—No :
Named he not that dark flower inscribed with woe ?

Stern manhood, break thy sword, and blush for shame ;
He did not even write his Anna's name !

With harrow'd heart that could be still and bleed,
She listen'd when the reader ceased to read.
In silent strength grief tore her soul's deep chords :
Oh, what had wrongs like hers to do with words ?
And all who saw her wept at what they saw.
Serenely pale, while all around her wept,
She slept—she sleeps ; but light shall yet arise,
Th' eternal day-spring, on her sightless eyes ;
And Mercy yet may purify with pain
That wretch beloved, and bid them meet again !

He, when the trump of war had blown its last,
Sigh'd and look'd back, repentant, on the past.
In pale inaction, languid, he declined,
And with the body sympathized the mind.
Long-slumbering feeling waked, and waked to woe,
Stung by remorse, the never-flattering foe,
That triumph'd o'er his maim'd and toil-worn frame,
As o'er the storm-struck ash the conquering flame.
He thought of Anna, and his tears ran o'er—
He thought of home, resolved to sin no more.
So the poor Hebrew, long content to roam,
The homeless wanderer, seeks at last a home ;
Quits the tall bark, and treads the hallow'd strand,
His agèd consort leaning on his hand,
Sedately glad, though tears bedim his eye,
To lay his bones where Abraham's ashes lie.

He climb'd the homeward ship, and blamed the wind,
And blamed the waves, that seem'd to lag behind
The bounding stern ; till England, like a cloud,
Dawn'd on the sight, where Heaven to ocean bow'd.
He leap'd to land ; and, wing'd o'er Snowgate's fern,
Beheld again the valley of the Dearn,
Cragg'd Hartley's broom, and Breton's shades below,
And Clayton's cottage-smoke ascending slow.
Down, down he hasten'd, pleas'd almost to pain,
And felt as if become a boy again.
Then fled the dream. Beside her cottage-door,
Remember'd well for pranks play'd there of yore,
He met a woman, lame and bent, whose breast
Had pillow'd Anna's infant cares to rest—
One who had taught him many a childish game.
But when he paused, and ask'd that agèd dame,
In tones that told the sudden dread he felt,
Not if his Anna lived, but where she dwelt,
Back shrank the crone, as from a thing abhorr'd ;
Then slowly forth she drew, without a word,
The brooch which, erst, his ill-starr'd Anna wore ;
And, with a look that pierced him to the core,
Placed in his hand (and turn'd abrupt away)
A lock of faded hair, too early grey !

NOTE.

(b) *Where is the youth, for deeds immortal born ?*

John Keats, author of *Endymion*, who died at Rome, aged 25.

THEY MET AGAIN.



To the Man of Sheffield and our hearts—THOMAS ASLINE
WARD, Esquire—I inscribe this Poem.

BOOK I.

INTRODUCTION.

SAD Laura ! dost thou mourn with me
 The year's autumnal spring ?
 Sigh'st thou this second wreath to see
 Of woodbines blossoming ?
 So late, so pale, with scentless breath—
 Like lingering Hope, that smiles in death ;
 And, e'en when life is o'er,
 Leaves on Misfortune's ice-cold face
 The sweetness of its last embrace
 To fade, and be no more.
 Lo ! June's divested primrose sports
 A silken coif again ;
 And, like late-smiling sickness, courts
 The coy morn, but in vain !
 Lo ! half the elm's rich robe is gone !
 The ash, a living skeleton,

Deplores his yellow hair !
Yet, while the maple bows her head,
 In mournful honours fair,
And while the beach-leaf rustles red,
Methinks the armèd gorse appears
 More golden, than when May
Left April dying in her tears,
 Beneath the plummy spray ;
And, for her lover's triumph won,
Danced with her blue-bell anklets on,
 And bless'd his burning eye.
Then, Laura, come, and hear the thrush,
O'er Autumn's gorse, from budding bush,
 Pour vernal melody !
Come ! and, beneath the fresh green-leaf
 That mocks the agèd year,
Thy bard, who loves the joy of grief,
 Shall weave a chaplet here ;
Not pluck'd from Summer's wither'd bowers,
Not form'd of Autumn's hopeless flowers—
 Yet sad and wan as they :
Here, still some flowers of Eden blow ;
But, deadly pale, and stain'd with woe,
 Like guilt they shun the day ;
While Folly treads beneath his feet
 The daisy of the vale ;
Love's rose, though sick at heart, is sweet—
 Joy's leaf is fair, though pale ;

And worth admires, resign'd and meek,
The tear-drop on the violet's cheek,
 And hope shall death survive ;
But, like the gorse, all thorns and gold,
Pride bids the sickening sun behold
 How blushing virtues thrive !

Oft, Laura, have we seen (while dewy Spring
Bent to the stockdove's plaintive murmuring
O'er shaded flowers) the lone, wild apple-tree,
With every bough carnation'd pallidly,
In some bright glade, exposed to morning's breeze
Some verdant isle, amid a sea of trees.
It seem'd to live on heaven's own sweets, and call
The wanton winds to kiss its blossoms all.
But soon, like dewdrops in the brightening sun,
Its fragrant soul exhaled—soon, one by one,
Its petals, faded into whiteness, died ;
And, sweet in ruin, lay on Canklow's side—
The snow of June. And thus, when time began
His deedful race, the young enthusiast, man,
In first intensest passion bless'd, could see,
Where all was beauty, nought so fair as he ;
But from his cheek sin chased th' elysian glow,
And turn'd the brightest hues of love to woe.
O Sin ! what havoc hast thou wrought on earth !
To what abortions has thy womb giv'n birth !

When first thy victim, man, conversed with pain,
Love's purest spirit soar'd to God again,
And murmurs issued from the bowers of bliss ;
But, when thy treachery poison'd in a kiss,
Hell raised his hands, and mock'd the throne sublime ;
Hell scarce believed th' unutterable crime ;
Heaven's brightness faded ; and, with sadden'd eye,
The blushing angels sigh'd—"Adultery !"

In yonder glen, beneath the aspen lone,
A matron sleeps, without memorial stone ;
And children trip unconscious o'er her grave,
Where, through the long grass, steals the lucid wave.
When earth was dark with fear, and, lost and seen,
The high moon glanced the hurried clouds between,
Like some blood-guilty wretch, who, self-exiled,
Wakes in the dead of night with anguish wild,
And, o'er the tree-tops waving to and fro,
Looks on the hopeless sea that moans below ;
Then stole she from her faithless husband's side,
Sought Don's dark margin, sobb'd a prayer and died.
He waked not, though a hand unearthly drew
The curtains of his bed, and to the hue
Of ashes changed his cheek. With open eyes,
He slumber'd still ; but speechless agonies
Wrought on his face convulsed his heart's despair,
And terror smote his damp, uplifted hair.
His spirit felt a spirit's strong control,
An injured spirit whisper'd to his soul—

“ No worm slinks down when I approach,
No night-bird stints his ditty ;
Yet will I mourn thee, though unheard,
For now my love is pity.
Again I'll hear thee talk of truth,
When Rother's rose is sweetest ;
Again I'll meet thee, perjured one,
When thou thy new love meetest.
While stars in silence watch my dust,
I'll sigh, where last ye parted,
O'er her who soon shall droop, like me,
Thy victim, broken-hearted.
And in that hour, to love so dear,
The stillest and the fleetest,
Unfelt I'll kiss my rival's cheek,
When Rother's rose is sweetest.”

O thou, whose wings o'er-arch the flood of years,
That rolling, stain'd with crimes, and mix'd with tears,
Whelms in his gulfs each unimmortal form ;
Spirit of Brightness ! proud to span the storm !
Thy word, O Love ! bade light and beauty be,
And Chaos had no form, till touch'd by thee !
Though call'd of old the god of serpent wiles,
Thou source of sweetest, bitterest tears and smiles,
Thy voice endears to man the humblest home ;
Fair is the desert, if with love we roam.
Where barks the fox, by golden broom o'erhung,
Where coos the fern-fowl o'er her cowering young,

'Thee gloomiest rocks acclaim, with greeting stern,
'To thee the uplands bow their feathery fern :
Shaking the dewdrop from his raptured wings,
The waking thrush salutes his mate, and sings ;
With amorous lays the glad lark climbs the sky,
And Heaven to earth pours down his melody.
But in thy name when erring mortals sin,
A plague, a cancer, blackens all within,
Till life groans loud his hopeless load beneath,
And the soul darkens into worse than death.
Then Love's meek question meets with no reply,
Save the fierce glance in hatred's sullen eye :
Sad is the day, and sleepless is the night,
And the rose poisons like the aconite.
Earth's verdant mantle is become a shroud ;
Sweet Eden's blushes vanish from the cloud ;
The rural walk, that pleased when life was new,
Where pendent woodbines grow, as erst they grew,
Can please no more ; the mountain air is dead ;
And Nature is a book no longer read.
Suspicion, scorn, contention, treachery come,
And all the fiends that make a hell of home.
Sold to the Furies, ever glad to buy,
Perchance lost man makes haste to kill and die,
Uplifts the assassin's dagger, and lays low
His idol, once adored, though hated now.
Then Horror's harpy hand, and gorgon scowl,
Rend the distracted tresses of his soul.

He hears sad voices in the silent air ;
Heaven seems a marble roof, that spurns his prayer.
Oh, for oblivion, he would barter heaven !
And self-forgotten need he be forgiven ?
In thought he sees the midnight stake, the tomb
Delved by the highway-side, in starless gloom,
And the swift bullet flash'd into the brain ;
Or rob'd Justice and her awful train ;
The fetter'd limb—the dungeon's agonies,
The scaffold—and the thousand thousand eyes,
All fix'd on him, whose head despair hath bow'd,
Whose heart is all alone in all that crowd ;
And like a hooted traitor, wild with fears,
Who sheds from eyeless sockets blood for tears,
While, raining curses on his guilty head,
The rabble shout him to his death of dread ;
Chain'd through the soul, he moves, in anguish blind,
And drags remembrance and remorse behind.

Sad as the marble forms on frailty's tomb,
The few surviving flowers of Eden bloom ;
And must the serpent, Falsehood, hide, beneath
Their petals dim, the fang whose touch is death ?
Hence to the fiends, thou glistening, fatal Asp !
By the long transport of thy parting clasp,
Then most adored, when falsest fear'd or found,
By thy dear coils around the true heart wound !
By suffering weakness, punish'd for thy guilt,
By all the blood which thou hast damn'd or spilt !

And, by the victims, who implore thy stay !
False Asp, that poisonest Love ! away—away !
Hence, serpent, to the fiends ! or darkling, rave
In Bothwell's form, o'er Mary Stuart's grave !
Shed o'er her dust thy tears of blood and fire,
And in repentant agonies, expire !
So shall distrust from Love's elysium fly,
So, the worst fever of the soul shall die,
With all the woes that Herod's ghost could tell,
And Mariamne—loved, alas ! too well !
But doom'd with Time to perish, yet shalt thou
Wrinkle with many a snaky fold his brow.
Though from his snowy pinions, never dry,
He hourly shakes the tears of poesy,
While woe shall weep, his wings are shook in vain,
And every plume must wear its pearl of pain.
To bards unborn thy deeds shall furnish themes
More sad than death, more dire than murder's dreams.

No fancied Muse do I invoke to aid
The song that tells of trusting truth betray'd ;
Be thou, my Muse, thou darkest name of woe,
Thou saddest of realities below,
Love !—But I call'd not thee, thou Boy of guile,
Cruel, though fair, that joy'st to sting and smile !
Sly urchin, wing'd and arm'd, too, like the bee,
And tressed with living gold—I call'd not thee !
But thee, sweet profligate, who gavest all—
Peace, earth, and Heav'n—for poison'd fire and gall !

'Thee, thee, thou weeping Magdalene, I call !
Alas ! o'er thee hath rush'd th' avenging blast ;
'Through thee the arrows of the grave have pass'd !
Avaunt ! thou palest daughter of Despair !
If thou art Love, what form doth Horror wear ?
Yet stay ! I know thee : in thy faded eye
'The light of beauty lingers—soon to die :
Known by the worm that feedeth on the heart,
Stay, guilty Magdalene ! we must not part
'Till I have told this saddest tale of thine,
And steep'd in tears each slow, complaining line.
For what is sinful passion, but the lamp
'That gilds the vapours of a dungeon damp,
And cheers the gloom awhile, with fatal light,
Only to leave at last a deeper night,
And make the darkness horror ? Yet for this,
'This shadowy glimmering of a troubled bliss,
Insensate man, peace, joy, and hope foregoes ;
Reckless, he plunges into cureless woes,
Buys fleeting pleasure with enduring pain,
And, drunk with poison, weeps to drink again.



BOOK II.

How, in this wild night, fares the malcontent ?
Beneath what pine, by bolt and whirlwind rent,
Seeks he to shelter his devoted form ?
Or, on what rock does he condemn the storm,
And shrink from human faces ? Cromwell dead,
And Charles restored, to northern isles he fled,
And vainly hoped (a cavern'd wolf) to dwell,
Where reigns the monarch eagle o'er the dell,
In hideous safety. But the billows wide
Yearn to divulge the restless wretch they hide ;
And ocean doth but mock him with the roar
Of waves cast high between him and the shore
Of verdant England. Wander where he will,
Proclaim'd a traitor, dogg'd and hunted still,
Swift comes the end, a struggle and a groan,
Death by the hangman's hand, or by his own.

There is a cavern midway in the rock
That bears, unmoved, the wave's eternal shock ;
'Tis called the Pirate's Den : gigantic stones
Hide the dark entrance ; and above them groans,
In every blast, a time-defying-tree,
Twin-brother of the crag. Sublimity,
Lean'd on his arm, beneath it sits, and sees
The bay of shipwreck, where the woful breeze

Murmurs, prophetic of the seaman's knell,
And screams the petrel o'er the hollow swell.
Full many a shrub, sequester'd, blooms around ;
The cluster'd Loveage decks the rugged ground ;
And o'er the rustic carpet, wrought in flowers,
The osprey's wing a snow of blossom showers.
It is a scene so lonely and so fair—
The winds, enamour'd, love to loiter there,
Stoop to salute the sea-pink, as they pass,
And coldly kiss the ever-waving grass.
The roof within, Cathedral-like, ascends
Sublimely arch'd and vaulted high, and bends
O'er pillars vast its sparry curtains grand,
Whose gems unnumber'd shine on every hand
Bright as the plumage of a seraph's wing :
Behold a palace meet for Ocean's King !
But he who lies in troubled sleep beside
The central fire, that casts its radiance wide,
Making with darkness and reflected light
A starry roof, and imitated night,
Most awful in its grandeur—What is he ?
What slumbering wretch, escaped the stormy sea,
Who, when his comrades sank to rise no more,
Sent his wild laugh th' affrighted billows o'er ?
What mortal slave of sorrow, love, or hate,
Cast on the strand alive to execrate
The storm that was not fatal, and the wave
That did not make the howling foam his grave ?

'Tis Moreland, passion's victim from his birth,
Who, like the murderer Cain, hath roam'd the earth.
He, self-deceived, deems man a dungeon'd slave,
While Fate, the gaoler, hears the captive rave ;
Smiling to see him roll his eyes in vain,
And grind his teeth, and shake th' insulting chain ;
And writhe in fury, like a self-stung snake,
And stamp upon his tombstone but to wake
The echoes of his prison-house of woe.
Victim of passion ! hast thou found it so ?
Evil must come of evil ; and, too late,
Thou call'st the fruit of crime and folly, " Fate."

Sleep, but not rest ! Lo ! o'er his features spread
An earthly darkness grows ; and pallid dread
Smites every lock and every limb amain.
His bristling hair is damp with fear and pain ;
And while without the deepening thunders roll,
He seems to hear the tempest in his soul.
O God ! 'tis dreadful ! Nature's self doth quake
As though her final hour were come ; and shake
E'en like the felon, whom th' offended laws
Have doom'd to die. And now the soundless pause
Locks the suspended soul in icy fear,
While Conscience whispers, " God, thy hand is here."
Again the billows are conflicting light :
The evil Angels have a dance to-night,
That shakes the centre ! O'er the booming bay
Again the sound, re-echoing, dies away ;

And still that sleeper trembles ! In his dreams
Sees he the flaming storm that wildly gleams
O'er ocean's wildness ? Wretch ! no common woe
Hath stamp'd the curse of Cain upon thy brow.
Hark ! in those horrid accents shriek'd Despair !
He rises :—Hath the lightning singed his hair ?
Lo ! from the ground he leaps in pale surprise,
And veils, with lifted hands, his dazzled eyes ;
And now he starts to find himself alone !
The hideous phantoms of his sleep are gone :
In low and interrupted words he speaks
His troubled thoughts ; and to the wave that breaks
Heard in the pauses of the storm below,
Mutters his guilt and recollected woe.

“ Again I am alone. Long have I been
Alone in crowds, and alien to the scene
Where the world's bustling minions shoulder'd me,
Outliving joy and hope itself, to be
My own tormentor ; and in vain to curse
The heart's blank solitude—a hell far worse
Than that which bigots fear. I have endured,
I still endure—though not in hope ; immured,
In dark reflection, scowling on the past,
Fearing the future ; and, if man is cast,
Like a frail weed upon the waters wide,
Rising and falling with the faithless tide,
Life is endurance. Best is he who sinks,
And sinks at once. The humble floweret shrinks,

And dies uprooted when the gloomy hour
Holds converse with the storm. But, cursed with
power,

Th' etersial pine, coeval with his rocks,
In gloomy stateliness triumphant, mocks
Heaven's baffled wing; yet stands, with tresses
rent,

Tremendous, undesired, a monument
Of vengeance! O'er calamity and crime,
O'er feeling victor, I arose sublime
And tranquil, though terrific. Now I roam
Where pirates lurk, making the sea-bird's home
My alpine fortress, and the blast my page.
To me the deep pays tribute in his rage.
Me, on his rocks impregnable, the Hern
Beholds in dread amaze; and from the fern
Looks forth the astonish'd fox with fading eyes.
Yells o'er the cliffs, and, wing'd with terror, flies.

"Yet courage here avails, and everywhere,
And all things may be vanquish'd, but despair;
For, though 'tis vain to fly from certain doom,
There is a Power which cannot be o'ercome—
The dreadless heart that *will* not. Black and vast
Let vengeance ride upon the rabid blast;
Let the storm smite his hands together; loud
The fiery bolt may thunder from the cloud—
'But not for ever!' Hope exclaims to Fear:
'When night's cold cheek is coldest, morn is near:

Beneath her heavy wind and pelting rain,
Low droops the flower that yet shall smile again ;
And while the coward trembles in dismay,
The brave look eastward, and behold 'tis day !'

“ But I shall hear Hope's angel voice no more :
Sternly I bear, as valour ever bore,
The evil that admits no cure ; and scorn
All-shunn'd complaint. Hope saw Duration born,
And never should desert him till he dies ;
But, falsely call'd the wretch's friend, she flies
When man is doom'd with cureless ills to cope ;
All *but* the wretched have a friend in Hope.
Yet while she smiles on Nature's common woe,
And plants the storm with flowers that sometimes blow,
Why should I rave, though here they will not grow ?
Alike averse to murmur and to weep,
Still in despite of thunder, I can sleep,
Though rest is for the happy. Come what may,
The past is past, nor will the future stay,
Though man, or fiend, or god obstruct her way.

“ I wore my youth in dreams on Pleasure's breast :
My sleep was sinful, and I woke unblest'd :
Most wretched, and deserving so to be,
I darkly suffer, but not sullenly.
I have rejoiced and sorrow'd ; I have proved
Th' extremes of fate, ' have loved, and been beloved.'
What fallen angel, not without a tear,
And piteous wafture of that hand most dear,

And frantic looks, and looks where love yet lives,
Smiles on my soul, and pities and forgives,
Even while she mourns the hour when first she fell
To guilt and shame? I know thee, wrong'd one,
 well !

Cursed be the tongue that utters ill of thee !
I found thee fond as fair : and I will be
Still faithful to thy memory, and disdain
The lying penitence of fear and pain.
Ye woodbine bowers, where oft, with throbbing
 heart,

We met in ecstasy, in tears to part !
Oh, woods of Darnal ! ye no more shall see
The matron tall who loved your shades for me ;
Love-listening Rother, thou wilt hear no more
Her guilty whisper on thy silent shore !
As when she trembled, hung her head, and wept,
Sweet as the flower on which the moonbeam slept,
Wan as the snow-white rose in Catliffe's vale,
But not, like it, in stainless meekness pale.
Scenes of my youth ! 'tis sadly sweet to look
Back on your paths, and read, as in a book,
Where painting's magic brings the path to view,
A witching story, mournful and too true ;
A tale of other times, when life was young,
And passion's heavenly harp was newly strung.

“ Yet deeds on memory's faithful tablet live
Which man cannot forget, nor God forgive.

Still to my soul returns the hour deplored
When I became a traitor, fear'd, abhorr'd,
And fiercely fought, and fought against the throne,
By gloomy, envious malice urged alone.
No love of freedom fired my stormy breast :
I deem'd the patriot half a fool at best.
I scorn'd his shallow hope, his honest zeal,
I mock'd the virtues which I could not feel.
No sacred ardour sanctified the deed,
And nerved my arm to make a tyrant bleed ;
But a base lust to trample on the great,
A fiendish instinct, a demoniac hate.

“ Whence was that sound ? It came not from
below ;

There none but wanderers of the waves can go :
Hush !—many voices hath the stormy sea.
I tremble—do I tremble causelessly ?
Death, I have heard thy shout, and seen thy frown,
When stooping Slaughter mow'd his thousands
down ;

And I have couch'd beside the sever'd limb,
When Horror call'd on night to cover him,
And thou wast dreadful then. But for this hour
Hast thou reserved thy soul-subduing power :
Thee never, Death, did I invoke, but still
I bow'd to mightiest circumstance my will ;
And, in the darkest hour and stormiest shade,
Look'd ever calmly for the dawn delay'd.

Yet would that thou hadst laid me with the slain,
Where England's bravest fell on Marston's plain ;
Little they fear'd thee, King of Terrors, then,
Now not at all : for in the war of men
They fought, and, shouting, died. But thus to
meet

Thy certain aim, and count thy coming feet,
While the half bloodless heart forgets to beat—
To meet thee thus, O Death ! is terrible !
Hush !—the hoarse cry is drown'd in ocean's yell.
Hark !—voices, murmurs, and the steps of men !
What ! will they storm the lion in his den ?
Hither my evil Angel led my feet,
And here deserted me. But, from retreat
Cut off, I still can rush upon the foe ;
And bold shall be the arm that lays me low,"
He said, and rush'd into the darkness lone,
And from his scabbard flash'd his falchion, known
By many a deathful deed in fields of blood,
Where guileful Cromwell's iron warriors stood
Like wave-girt rocks that spurn th' assailing sea.
Through rifted clouds the moon look'd fearfully,
On ocean's mountain'd plain and frantic foam,
And rocks and caves—the ocean-prowler's home.
He listen'd—but he heard no human sound ;
He spoke—but none replied ; he gazed around,
And half expected, on night's rushing wing,
To meet the frown of some unearthly thing.

Lo ! in the light a dangerous pavement lay,
Bright, dewy, cold, th' eternal marble grey !
And, at his feet, with bare and hoary head,
Expiring, gasp'd the object of his dread.
O'er no arm'd spy, by kingly vengeance sent—
O'er dying Age reclined the Malcontent,
Raised in his arms the panting wretch he bore,
And laid him on the cavern's gleaming floor ;
But as he stoop'd beside the fire to bare
The ice-cold limbs, and wring the dripping hair,
Glanced o'er the stranger's brow his troubled eye,
And, shuddering, he arose, and raised a cry
Of terror ; backward sinking on his knee,
With lifted hands, like one who starts to see
The features of the murder'd on his way,
And, bent on flight, but palsied by dismay,
Falls chain'd to what he dreads. Why shrank the bold,
Appall'd by weakness, weaponless, and old ?
Because he saw in that expiring man
An injured friend. In youth their love began—
A love that, save in Heaven, could not endure ;
So warm it was, so passionately pure,
More like the love of angels than of men ;
And both were bless'd, for both were guiltless then,
And one was guiltless still. He, wise in vain,
Sow'd hope and love, but reap'd despair and pain ;
And too severely wrong'd to be forgiven,
Now stood between the Malcontent and Heaven.

By seas divided, and by years of pain,
To part for ever, lo ! they met again !
And Moreland's gloomy spirit seem'd to mourn
O'er hopeless hours that never could return,
And listen to a sweet and soul-felt tone,
That long, long lost, vibrated to his own.
The wintry frost of sixty hapless years,
All dark and sunless, melted into tears :
He watch'd the struggling sufferer where he lay,
And wept as he would weep his heart away.



BOOK III.

'Tis morning ; o'er the billows glimmers grey,
The growing light of slow advancing day ;
Restored to life and thought, the wanderer hoar
Wakes in the cave high-roof'd on ocean's shore.
Stretch'd near the fire above the restless waves,
With many a pause between, he weeps and raves ;
Now sad his speech and low—now wildly loud ;
And near him Moreland sits in sadness bow'd,
Turning, at times, his alter'd face aside,
The growing trouble on his brow to hide ;
Oft through his fingers and the gushing tear
He views his guest ; and tawny gleams of fear
Course his sad check, and to his gloomy eye
Give milder light and tamed ferocity.

But when, with counterfeited voice, he strove
To soothe the dying sufferer, and remove
His mind's disease, and health's destroyer—fear—
Bidding him hope there yet was comfort near,
And that he yet his distant home should see—
Then Eustace raised his eye of misery,
And fix'd it on the speaker, with a look
That from his cheek the sickly yellow took,
And left it white. “But what art thou?” he said;
“My languid eyes, with death's dim films o'erspread,
Scarce see thy face; yet I, on some far shore,
Have heard, methinks, that hollow voice before.”

“Nay,” answer'd Moreland: “for, from youth to age,
Here have I dwelt in this my hermitage;
And made my feet familiar with the glens
Of unclimb'd mountains, and the perilous dens
Where the wolf sleeps, and wilds, since time began,
Untrodden, save by me, a homeless man.”

“’Tis well!” said Eustace; “and, my friend unknown,
Thou soon again shalt sojourn here alone.
A little while, and thou with up-piled stones
And scanty earth, shalt sepulchre my bones.
Oh, I have long conversed with sighs and groans!
Long—I have been acquainted long with tears;
And I am old, and older than my years.
But tell not me of home. I *have* no home—
The wretched can have none. I love to roam

A wanderer from myself ; and, had my soul
 Wings, I would fly beyond the farthest pole—
 Yea, cast behind me earth and every star,
 And dwell in soulless, lifeless space afar.
 Home, saidst thou ? To the grave, thou babbler—go,
 And ask the worm what home hath hopeless woe ?
 Home !—what is home ? O read the answer here !
 Tis not the hearth, but that which makes it dear.
 I dream'd of such a home—that dream is gone ;
 And now I seek my home—the silent one ;
 For life is joyless, hope is fled, and fear ;
 Death, death alone remains—and he is near.
 Life's glow, departing, yet informs my cheek ;
 Feeble, not feeblest. I have strength, though weak,
 Enough to feel, in Nature's fainting strife,
 More than all pain—this weariness of life.
 O Death ! how long ? O let me—let me die !
 There is a love eternal in the sky ;
 And there I may forgive—perhaps forget.
 I do not curse—I will be patient yet ;
 Though they whom most I scorn'd condemn'd me
 most,
 I *will* be patient—Will ? Oh, while we boast
 Our woe-tried constancy, we but sustain,
 Because we must, inevitable pain !
 “ I know it well—I know I rave in vain.
 What brought me hither, say'st thou ? Love and hate,
 A faithless friend, a woman, and my fate.

I once was rich, nor dwelt beneath the sky
A flatter'd fool more fortune-cursed than I ;
And Love's false morn was bright, too bright to
last :

But, when the dogs bark'd at me as I pass'd,
And worldlings, if they met me, travell'd fast,
Ann tore at once the bandage from my mind ;
I gazed on truth, and wish'd my heart were blind !

“ I was undone ! by Ann and all forgot ;
Cold—naked—hungry—and she sorrow'd not ;
Distracted—and she soothed not my despair ;
Sick, and in prison—and she came not there.
Night was around me, and I wept alone,
Despised, neglected, left unheard to groan.
But when I rose out of the earth, and light
And Nature's face rush'd lovely on my sight,
How did the bosom-serpent greet her mate ?—
With looks of rancour and with words of hate ;
And wretch she call'd the wretch herself had made.
She cursed me to my weeping eyes—she bade
My children curse me ! and I wish'd again
To hear the clanking of my dungeon chain.
But Julia was the sweetest child of all :
She kiss'd, she bless'd me, she alone did call
Her mother's husband ‘ Father !’ While the rest,
Jane and Matilda, (though my own,) express'd
No joy their sire's long-absent face to see,
Julia—the youngest—Julia welcomed me !

Dear Julia !—on my broken heart she smiled ;
Dear Julia !—wherefore was not she my child ?

“ But never will I drink again from cup
Made by the skill of mortal. I scoop'd up
The water in the shallows of the sand,
And drank it from the hollow of my hand.
Nay, do not think that I myself deceive,
But trust what I, in horror, must believe.
They gave me poison in my drink ; and *he*
Smiled as I drank it ; and—O misery !
I burn'd and lived ; I burn'd—and yet I live.
God, in thy mercy infinite, forgive—
Forgive them if thou canst ! and I will try—
Will wrestle hard to pardon both and die.”

Breathless, he paused ; and Moreland tried again
To soothe with gentle words his bosom's pain ;
And bade him hope, since life's worst ills were o'er,
Heav'n yet had earthly good for him in store.

“ Good ? ” Eustace cried—“ O speak of good no
more !

It is a word that I have heard of—‘ Good ? ’
O name it not to me ! I understood
Its import feelingly when life was new,
And faith a child ; for then my Ann was true.
But now I have no name. An eaglet fledged,
Or, like the homeless tempest, privileged
To wander where I will, I breathe on her
Forgiveness, mix'd with curses ; and prefer,

Before all roofs of faithless man, the sky,
And envy every wild bird's wing on high.
A moment she was mine—one bright brief hour ;
And then she fled in darkness ! Like a flower,
Dropp'd from an infant's hand into the deep,
She left my bosom, and to troubled sleep
Consign'd my dreams. A vision bright and brief,
Joy fled to come no more ! and, like a leaf
Shook from the bough when winds of winter rave,
I float and whiten on the desert wave.

“ Thus was I left, but not alone, to sigh.
Though sickness quench'd the light in Julia's eye.
My Julia faded. Mine ?—she died, at last,
And then the bitterness of woe was past ;
For I had loved her better than my own,
Because she kiss'd me, when my soul bow'd down
By rancour's curse despair'd. I follow soon ;
My day of life wanes nightward fast from noon,
And evening lowers. Yet, once more let me
gaze

On ocean, stretch'd in wild morn's clouded blaze.
For Ann and I (she lov'd thee, Ocean, well)
Have watch'd on other shores thy hollow swell,
So brightly blue, so beautifully bright,
When every billow was a ridge of light,
And light seem'd life. But she will hear no more
The tumult of thy loud-resounding shore :
I follow next, for she, too, went before.

O native scenes, I see ye in my soul !
O England, green, where southern billows roll !
Ye towers of Sheaf, where royal Mary wept !
Ye banks of Don, where oft my childhood slept !
Ye giant oaks, that, from the adder's cliff,
Frown'd o'er the dark wave and my gliding skiff !
Thou, Wincobank, on whom the golden cheek
Of eve rests loveliest ! and ye hills of Peak,
That softly melt into the airy blue,
And hear the lark beneath—adieu ! adieu !”

Here paused he ; but ere long, in accents low,
Resumed, with dying lips, his tale of woe ;
As, whispering, thro' the gorse on Bretland's breast,
The dark March tempest sighs itself to rest.

“ Oh, she was foul and fair ! Yet once her mind
Was lovely as her face ; and if the wind
Ne'er kiss'd a ringlet on a fairer cheek,
Her spirit once was, as the twilight meek,
And, as the wild flower's blushes, innocent.
Yet to the grave with spotted name she went,
Before the faces of astonish'd men.
I saw her strive with death, and wept not then.
She wept—and raised her trembling hands in pray'r,
And mine were raised with hers ; for I was there,
E'en by her bed of pain. I saw the fear
Of death convulse her frame, and in her ear
I whisper'd hope. Then from her bosom broke
Sad thanks in sighs, and, sobbing loud, she spoke :

‘ Pardon’d by thee, I seek my shameful grave :
Oh, still, my Lord, thy injured heart forgave !
Tender and true, though sever’d from my hate,
Thy love still lived, and sought no second mate.
O may I meet thee in those realms divine !
Or is eternal Mercy less than thine ?
Yet will I love, and hear thee—see thee still ;
And woe shall bow to my triumphant will.
Yet will I snatch thy whisper from the gale,
And o’er the gates of sin and death prevail.
What chain can hold the disembodied mind ?
Grim hell may torture thought, but cannot bind.
And when, released from this disastrous clay,
To happier regions thou shalt wing thy way,
My soul, by rigid Justice unforgiven,
Shall weep, an outcast on the verge of heaven ;
At distance see my children wander free,
And never bid adieu to them or thee !’

“ I pour’d into her soul Religion’s balm ;
I watch’d her awful silence, and was calm ;
And when she raised her eye, resign’d and meek,
Warm on my wither’d hand, and woe-worn cheek,
I felt her last—last tear. She spoke no more :
The sinful sufferer’s many pangs were o’er,
And mine scarce felt. I heard the shovell’d clay
Fall heavy on her bier. I turn’d away
With bursting heart. Lo ! as my head I bow’d
I saw th’ adulterer in the homeward crowd !

But, like a frozen sea, on which the wind
Can raise no billow, slept my awe-quell'd mind ;
All angry feeling from my bosom fled,
The passions all were chain'd—my heart was dead.

“I may not lie where Ann in cold earth lies ;
But might I see again with these sad eyes
The clay that is her pillow, they would close
Happy to shut for ever on the woes
Of such a world as this. I weep for her :
I am not stone : she was a sufferer,
And, though a sinner, yet a Magdalene :
She died repentant, and was loveliest then.
Oh, she was false to me ! but I am true ;
And, when she died, we then were wed anew.
The worms, the worms our bridal bed prepare ;
Long waits the bride—in vain ! I come not there.
Sever'd in life, still, still let death divide ;
Why should I slumber by the lost one's side ?
Yet, when the trump of doom shall rend the sky,
And wake all sleepers, she shall meet an eye
That could not meet hers frowning. Oh, her breast,
Though dearest still, is spotted and unblest'd :
No pillow meet for me, although I long for rest !

“Let me not doubt God's justice ! Oh, what
fate

Pursues my race, as with a demon's hate ?
Evil must come of evil ! that I know ;
But how have we incurr'd this shame, this woe,

This desolation? How long must I bear
This fever of the soul, and, in despair,
Invoke the worm that will not come and feed?
Still, still I breathe, while woes on woes succeed.
Happy in this, Ann did not live, like me,
To mourn her daughters' guilt and misery.
Lured by two villains from their native shore,
By me pursued in vain, and seen no more,
They fled—they left me, hopeless and alone,
To curse their birth, and name them with a groan.
As back I voyaged, the tempestuous wind
Bow'd the tall masts, and heaved the seas behind;
The thunder knew me, the flash look'd me through,
The billows wild the man of sorrows knew;
And ocean would not spare one friendly wave
To whelm my misery in a briny grave.
Dash'd from the reeling deck by surge and blast,
I sunk—I rose—I reach'd the strand at last.
And when thou found'st me on the rock's cold brow,
I was not sure if then I dream'd or no:
From mile-high crags, girt midway by the storm,
Th' adultress seemed to hurl my faded form;
And thou might'st deem the fierce and parching wind
Had left of me no trace, save dust behind—
Wan dust, on which a viewless finger cold
Had traced the lines that all with dread behold.

“Why dost thou turn away thy brow severe?
Why would'st thou hide from me thy generous tear?”

The rock's dark tenant melts at my distress !
Thou weepest, cavern'd king of loneliness !
Alas !—but no, it cannot be ; for thou
Didst rove, thou say'st, in childhood, on the brow
Of star-loved mountains hoar since 'Time began
Pathless and wild, and seldom sought by man,
Thou say'st, I have not known thee ; and mine eyes,
Dim as my troubled spirit, recognize
In thee distinctly nought ; yet—oh, thy scowl
Brings back a wintry darkness to my soul,
Like the remembrance of a dream, that leaves
No definite impression, while it grieves
The heart that feels, and long will feel, how dire,
How black it stood, and what a livid fire
Gleam'd o'er its features of obscurity !
Or, like the sea, when midnight storms are high,
Heard, but not seen, while terror on the shore
Sees the gun flash, but cannot hear its roar ;
And long with eyes strain'd dizzy o'er the main,
Vainly expects to hail that flash again !

“ Farewell, kind tenant of the ocean's cave !
I hear no more the restless billow rave.
Thy features vanish from my view : I reel,
From sense to gloom. What is that I feel,
Foretelling stranger feelings yet to be,
Ere all is past ? A shuddering agony
That is not pain. O thou most terrible !
Thou nothing, that marr'st all things ! canst thou tell.

When from the block the sever'd head falls low,
And glaring eyes seem conscious of the blow,
And quivering lips in soundless words complain,
What pangs may writhe the agonizing brain,
Where thought, perchance, still lingers? I shall
know

Soon the deep secret, veil'd from all below,
And what the dying feel when sense is dumb :—
Thou beckonest me, black angel ! and I come.”

Thus, in the ocean-cavern's glimmering light,
To Moreland spake the wanderer of the night.
Question'd in vain, his words replied no more ;
But Moreland bent the lifeless body o'er,
Fix'd in the mute intensity of pain,
And lived, in thought, his past years o'er again.
What, hopeless rebel ! would'st thou give to be
Wrong'd, like thy victim, and as pure as he ?



WITHERED WILD FLOWERS.



To the Author of "Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions"—the Bentham of Hallamshire—as a tribute of respect, unworthy, but most sincere, I dedicate this humble Poem.

BOOK I.

DON, like a weltering worm, lies blue below,
 And Wincobank, before me, rising green,
 Calls from the south the silvery Rother slow,
 And smiles on moors beyond, and meads between.
 Unrivall'd landscape ! Oh, it is a scene
 That to remembrance brings the hope-bless'd days,
 But not their hope ! And at my feet, serene
 And cold lies he, and deaf to mortal praise,
 Who from this mount, erewhile, rejoiced to gaze ;
 Who in this temple, plain and unadorn'd,
 Duly as Sabbath came, throughout the year,
 The word of Him in Jewry heard and scorn'd,
 In Jewry scourged and slain, rejoiced to hear ;
 While Age shed oft th' involuntary tear,

And younger voices sweetly join'd to sing
The warbled anthem, plaintive, soft, and clear,
Till soar'd the soul on pure devotion's wing,
And God look'd down, and angels, listening.
Daughters of Memory ! shall the good man sleep
Unnoted, though immortal, in the grave,
While forms of angel-mockery seem to weep,
O'er tyrant vile, or viler willing slave ?
The lying line shall prosperous villains crave
To bid their flatter'd baseness live again ?
Shall verse from sure oblivion try to save
Each worthless name ? and no unvenal pen
Write, " Here lies Nature's child, the best of men ;"
The sire of that mourn'd youth, whose soul of
fire

Cherish'd in mine a spark that else had died,
The love of Milton's song, and Ossian's lyre,
And Burns, to glory's noblest sons allied ?
Cold o'er thy bosom shall the earthworm glide, (^a)
Where communed oft that low-laid youth with me ;
And shall I hang my harp on Rother's side,
For ever mute and stringless there to be,
Teacher and Friend ! without one strain to thee ?
Teacher and Friend, who bad'st me syllable
Words cull'd from learning's page with weary eye !
Thy patience taught me zealously and well,
But could not teach, like thee, to live and die ;
To envy nought beneath the ample sky ;

To mourn no evil deed, no hour misspent ;
And, like a living violet, silently
Return in sweets to heaven what goodness lent,
Then bend beneath the chastening shower content.
But thou no more, with eye refresh'd, shalt see ^(b)
The long-watch'd seedling from the soil aspire,
Or bind the rose, or train the gadding pea ;
No more shalt thou for victor flowers inquire,
Or proudly hear th' expected guest admire
Thy gemm'd auricula, a growing flame,
Or polyanthus, edged with golden wire, ^(c)
The poor man's flower, that lifts to humble fame,
Till e'en in print appears his envied name.
Who now shall tend thy plants, thy priceless flowers,
Emblems of thee, but not more pure than thou ?
The morn shall miss thee, and the dewy hours
Of eve deplore, as I deplore thee now ;
And Spring shall pass her hand athwart her brow,
When not a gem of thine shall deck her hair,
Then shake in haste the dewdrop from the bough,
And to the spot where thou art laid repair ;
"Where is my Druid?" Death shall answer—

“ There ! ”

How hopeless, happy Spirit, is the groan,
When God calls Guilt from all his joys away !
But heavenly-sweet is Music's saddest tone,
When o'er the lyre of Love Death's fingers stray ;
Less sweet the sound, when winds of midnight play ^(d)

On that wild harp which well thy skill could frame.
And when thy dust was mingled with the clay,
To weep o'er thee, Affection—Friendship, came,
And there was one who could not sob thy name !
Thou, guest of angels, hast of praise no need ;
But I have need of thine and virtue's aid :
And taught by thee each deathless lay to read,
Shall I forget my teacher lowly laid ?
Though every strain of mine, alas ! must fade,
Like idle vapour on the barren sea,
Shall I forget the Christian undismay'd,
The meekest child of truth and purity ?
I sing of Death ; and shall I not of thee ?
But unlike thee are Passion's sin-bound slaves,
That tinge my song with beauty's blasted bloom,
While to my saddest theme I call the waves
Of farthest seas, and homeless storms, that boom
O'er worlds of woods, a universe of gloom !
Swamps, dens, and caves, beneath one boundless
pall,
Where serpents lurk, their passing prey to doom,
Lone horror shudders at the grim wolf's call,
And dwells barbarian Man, most savage he of all.

Joy after woe, as after darkness light !
And sad Newhaven will not weep to-night.
O happy meeting ! peace and valour meet,
There is rejoicing in the town and fleet,

Light in the windows, laughter at the board,
For dire Metacom quell'd, and peace restored. (e)
Amid his warriors, Winslow sits in pride,
With Kirk (his guest from England) at his side—
A martial libertine, to falsehood true,
Who tells of Milton much, and Cromwell too ;
Of Charles the Martyr, hapless and revered ;
And hunted regicides, who fled and fear'd.
And there, too, smiling on his smiling friends,
Yet pale with thought, the saint-like Elliot bend
Who to the naked Indian's leafy shed
Proclaim'd the resurrection of the dead ;
And while the savage on his accents hung,
Gave the bless'd Word of God another tongue.
And beauty's brightest eyes are glancing near ;
Nor doth the sternly courteous cavalier
From transatlantic charmers turn away,
Or deem the British fair more fair than they ;
For, Roman matron in her port and air,
There Portia sits ; or is Cornelia there ?
Or Agrippina ? not in widow'd weeds,
But glorying in her glorious husband's deeds.
'Tis Mary, sharer of thy heart and bed,
Danger-tried Winslow ! And, with languish'd head,
While scandal marks the trouble of her eye,
Fix'd in desponding thought's intensity,
Like guilt in sleep, or passion in his shroud,
Though gay no more, still proudest of the proud,

Tall Mary's taller sister sits beside
Henley, the marksman, with the lip of pride.
How changed, Senena, is thy downcast eye !
He who knows wherefore, fain would whisper why ;
And sacrifice a maiden's all, her name,
That coxcombs might exult, and prudes defame.
Behold her cheek ! Still, still it hath its rose—
Alas ! not that which freshens as it grows !
But one whose sweets the heart will not forget—
Pensive and fading, though not faded yet !
Her soul seems frost-bound on its lovely throne,
Like beauteous life by winter turn'd to stone :
The impassion'd crystal wants but warmth and breath,
And thought's expression lives and speaks in death ;
The icy charm, insatiate, we behold,
While admiration feels his blood run cold.

“ If your wide wilderness of wants and woes,”
Said Kirk to Winslow smiling, “ can disclose,
Amid its horrors, flowers superb as these,
We need not wonder that your deserts please.
Fair flowers, by Heaven ! the stateliest too they are
That ever bloom'd beneath Love's dewy star !
But one, as if transferr'd from Paradise,
And sorrowing for lost Heav'n, seems fix'd in ice ;
Her lofty graces win us, and depress,
Awe while they charm, and chill with loveliness,”
He said, and with a soldier's freedom gazed
On sad Senena ; who her eye upraised,

And, with a glance around the circle thrown,
In each heart's secret fear'd to read her own ;
While Mary's eye met hers, and took and gave
Pangs, like remember'd freedom to the slave.

“ Fair, native flowers our rugged land adorn,”
Said Winslow ; “ but my wife is British born.
She, from the rage of civil discord, brought
In childhood hither, scarce remembers aught
Of sea-girt home ; yet still that home is dear,
And England's praise is music to her ear.”

“ Madam,” said Kirk, “ you wrong your native
isle.

England, defrauded of so bright a smile,
When back she hails me from the sterile sea,
Though rich in beauty, will seem poor to me.
But pine you not at heart to see once more
Your wave-rock'd cradle, our Britannian shore ? ”

The matron answer'd—while her graver eye
Reproved the soldier's fearless flattery—
“ In England, none who know and love me live ;
I have not there one living relative ;
And therefore feel I small desire to see
The foam-girt land of my nativity ;
Where Cavalier and Roundhead hail and bless
Charles and the law, whose rule is happiness.”

“ Yet here,” said Kirk, “ by dangers compass'd
round,
Ye dread the Indian whoop in every sound.

I am a soldier—I have look'd on blood ;
And, on the howling battle-field withstood
Death's sternest menace ; yet Metacom's deeds
Appal my heart, that shudders while it bleeds,
To hear the horrors of his butchery,
Which spares nor stooping age nor infancy."

" For his defeat," said Elliot, " thanks to heaven !
Yet be the savage in the man forgiven.
His loss our gain ; as he descends we rise,
And grow and spread, like flame, before his eyes.
If every White Man aims at him a blow,
Justly he sees in every White a foe ;
And, doom'd in combat or in flight to die,
Does he not well to face his enemy ?
Sage, patriot, hero, king ! for Nature's rights,
Brave as our own Caractacus, he fights.
Reluctant draws the knife, and heaves a sigh ;
Then wars on fate and possibility.
For, arm'd to extirpate his hated race,
The Whites shall hunt them o'er earth's blasted face ;
Till, in the ocean of the farthest west,
The last Red Man shall shroud his bleeding breast."

" Where ruined Memphis," Winslow said, and sigh'd.
" Lies like a giant blasted in his pride ;
Where Tadmor droops, by herbless sands embraced,
A childless mother in the houseless waste ;
Where old Athena, who can never die,
Speaks of the dead in wan sublimity ;

Where mourns th' eternal city, still a queen,
The traveller weeps o'er glories that have been ;
There still the portals of the gods remain,
By Desolation's mace assailed in vain.
But here no column, with pathetic brow,
While awe-struck Time reclines in tears below,
To other years, and men unborn, shall tell
Where more than Roman valour fought and fell."

" Their very name shall perish ! " Henley cried,
With bitter smile of factious spleen and pride ;
" Their very name shall perish ! scorn'd by Time,
Nor live a day, like courtly things in rhyme.
Alas ! few flatterers kneel prostrated low
To him whose sole exchequer is his bow ;
And undeceived, unsung, that king may die
Who hath no humbler palace than the sky."

Rebellious to his will, that strove to hide
In cold indifference his offended pride,
Kirk's darkening visage frown'd a mute reply,
While Henley, pausing, fixed on him his eye ;
Then placing on his head his cap unplumed,
Th' irreverent wrangler thus his taunts resumed :—

" ' God save the King ! ' our loyal wilds exclaim,
But not, God save Metacom, poor and lame.
Well know we, courtly sir, that Power is Right :
The blind themselves see worth in wealth and might ;
For Power's adorers only worship Fate,
And Power was never illegitimate.

Strong is the king who reigns by right divine,
And nobles round him cringe, for armies shine.
Before him Justice sits, nor sleeps, nor winks,
And vultures die, or no corruption stinks.
For gaping crowds with liberal hand he carves,
And merit at his table feeds or starves.
A god on earth, and fear'd like him of hell,
The good who serve him are rewarded well.
Secure he reigns, untroubled, undismay'd,
For loyal are his servants—and are paid."

Thus spoke he, factious—mischief his delight,
Himself a compound of disdain and spite,
To none submitting, and insulting all,
Sedition on his lips, his life a brawl.
He ended, sneering. Kirk turn'd black with ire,
And on his forehead darkness seem'd on fire.
Lo, as the courtier frown'd, Senena rose ;
Her soul was struggling with unutter'd woes ;
Pale on her cheek expired the blasted bloom :
In Mary's eye sate discontent and gloom—
And sad Senena, tottering, left the room.
All wondering, gazed ! But Kirk, with gloomy stare, (^f)
Perused each sun-brown'd warrior's haughty air,
And, starting, almost fear'd rebellion there.
In Winslow's mien, a Lambert seem'd to lower—
In Winslow's form, a Cromwell seem'd to tower !
He shrank from Henley's shadow on the wall,
And inly mutter'd, "Traitors are they all."

Frowning, he rose, and sternly waved adieu,
And, mute and slow, retired. Then all withdrew,
But not all silent. Boisterous Henley laugh'd ;
And too, too much of gall his heart had quaff'd,
To spare the angry messenger of kings,
And deem abuse and scorn forbidden things.

Midnight was past ; but not a streak of grey
Dawn'd in the east, to tell of coming day.
No murmur on the dreams of silence broke ;
The moon still slumber'd o'er the gospel-oak, (^g)
Beneath whose shade Newhaven's fathers kept
Their first sweet Sabbath, grateful while they wept
To think of England, whence their steps were driven
To worship in his wilds the God of Heaven.
Blue, brightly blue, was night's ethereal hall,
When, like a form that decks some temple's wall,
And paler than the marble, wander'd forth
Senena, the betray'd ; and the cold north
Play'd with her hair, that sought her feet below,
And on her shoulders lay like night on snow.
Crisp in the night-wind shook her single vest !
The moon look'd calmly on her naked breast,
And the wan stars beheld with awed delight,
One like themselves, sad, silent, cold, and white.
What magic was there in that courtier's speech,
That words like his the secret heart could reach,
And make the fairest of the fair and proud
Appal with beauty midnight's darkening cloud ?

Or, did wan death, in poor Senena's form,
Walk with unecho'd step, and quit the worm?
Say, *did* that apparition breathe and glow?
Did the heart heave beneath that breast of snow?

I know her by that hopeless look and tear;
'Tis she, Senena's self: but wherefore here?
When last that broad oak's branches o'er her moan'd.
Low at the feet of Henley laid, she groan'd;
Pray'd him to save a maiden's all—her fame;
Pray'd him to snatch her from a grave of shame:
And when speech fail'd, her tears, that silent ran,
Implored a monster to become a man.
But now—What burden bears she on her breast,
And fondly bending, kisses into rest?
A mother and no wife, she sobs forlorn
O'er what she loves and dreads—her infant born
In secret. Lo! three lovely, pallid things,
Fairer than fancy's wild imaginings,
Night, at this moment, as she sits alone,
Sees from the silence of her starry throne—
Like the swan's wing, Senena's cheek of woe;
The moon, high-placed on heaven's majestic brow;
And the moon's image on the waves below,
That glimmers deep and still. Is it to lave
Her raven tresses, that above the wave
Senena bends? Athwart her outstretch'd arms
They flow, and veil, but cannot hide her charms.
Say, while recumbent o'er the wave she stands,

Why heaves her heart with her extended hands ?
What sound, O God ! was that ? And, hark ! a scream
Succeeds that plunge. Lo ! on the strangling stream,
With head thrown back, erect she gazes there,
While horror stiffens her uplifted hair ;
And her eyes gleam dilated, pale, and wild.
Oh ! hath she cast into the wave her child ?
That cry again ! but fainter—and away
She turns and flies ; yet backward, in dismay,
Instinctively to see some dreadful thing,
She looks, and stops, intensely listening.
A sob ?—how feeble ! and the little breast
That heaved it forth is even now at rest ;
For, ah ! where is the burden that she bore,
Press'd to her bosom, and kiss'd o'er and o'er
With such sad fondness ? Horror hears her sighs :
And, like a bird with wounded wing, she flies
In haste yet slowly. She hath pass'd the hill ;
The echoes slumber on earth's bosom chill ;
Smooth flows the wave again, and all is still.

Lo ! she hath reached her chamber, in despair !
And, scarce alive, she sinks into her chair,
The stone-still image of all-dreaded death !
Mary bends o'er her with suspended breath,
And all is silence save the throbbing heart.
Ah ! bid pulsation from its fount depart !
To hush the *heart* is woman's hardest task.
How Mary's look inquires ! What would it ask

But what she knows too well, and dreads to know ?
Oh ! which sad bosom feels severest woe ?
Which sister-mourner do we pity most—
That lost one, or the wretch who deems her lost ?
The taper trembles on its little stand ;
Ah, no ! Senena, with convulsive hand,
Hath dash'd it out ! and wan she bends in gloom :
Burst Mary's tears ! she rushes from the room.

And now doth guilt sit lighter on thy breast,
Poor, fall'n Senena ? Sank thy heart, oppress'd,
Dreading thy picture in a sister's eye,
Dreading to meet a *sister's* scrutiny ?
Alas—alas ! guilt fears to be alone !
And wouldst thou hide in solitude the groan
Wrung by remorse from conscience in despair ?
Oh, questions vainly urged ! Nor force nor prayer
Can stop Time's flight, and bid the present stay,
Nor tears recall the deed of yesterday.
No—no ! but Heaven can pardon and deliver
The suffering child of sin—O God ! forgive her !



BOOK II.

Love !—but not Thou, whose mightiest Hand afar
Guides in his printless path each wheeling star.
Love !—but not Thou, our type of Heaven, whose
breast
Rocks beauty's rosiest babe in smiles to rest.

Despairing Love, who long'st in blood to steep
The bed where thou dost toss, and fain wouldst sleep !
How like a lily, stain'd with murder's gore,
Thy sorrow weeps ! Yet, not for evermore
Shalt thou, a flower distain'd with mourning, bend
Through ages, rolling slow, of hopeless end ;
And while the funerals of the stars pass by,
Still tremble in the blast of destiny.
Thy guilt hath tears, though darkest guilt it be,
And pitying Heaven hath mercy e'en for thee.

It was the evening of a sunless day :
Slowly the heavy vapours roll'd away,
Pouring no more the rain. The weary gale
Bow'd still th' indignant pine ; and chill, and pale,
And indistinct, each watery object nigh
Wore the dim hues of distance to the eye.
It was the hour that pensive thought loves best,
The gloaming hour, when toil retires to rest,
When music's voice is sweet as love's caress,
When dying light is loveliest loneliness.
When hope's tear flows more limpid than the dew,
And tearless wretches try to weep anew,
And find a joy in grief. While charged with rain,
Each blossom droop'd—like innocence, in pain
And silence, weeping—with desponding soul,
Seneca from her joyless chamber stole.
Instinctively she sought the fatal shore,
That saw a deed which she must still deplore,

And turning from the past her hopeless view,
Like Montfort, sigh, "Would, would it were to do!"
She sought that fatal shore—but found not there
Joy in her grief, nor hope in her despair:
For evil tongues were busy with her fame,
And conscience trembled at her whisper'd name.
Hopeless, she long'd to mount th' unhallow'd bark,
And sail the deep irremeable dark:
On death she call'd, but with averted eye;
The dead she envied, yet she fear'd to die.

But not unwatch'd she went. She heard the sound
Of well-known footsteps—yet she looked not round;
And Henley stood beside her, blank in awe.
Her hand from his she deign'd not to withdraw:
He press'd it, while his own with fever burn'd;
But hers, clay cold, no pressure soft return'd.
Humbled, he ask'd, with shame unwonted, why
Such dreadful coldness froze him from her eye,
And why they met not? With averted air,
The mourner heard; and, strengthen'd by despair,
Stood in her silence. Yearning for the grave,
She watch'd the tremble of the conscious wave
That chilly clasp'd her babe of hapless love;
And thought of Heaven, but dared not look above.

Long thus, in mute abstraction, on the strand,
Fix'd, stern, and calm, she moved nor eye nor hand.
Unmann'd, he wept, and clasp'd, and kiss'd her knee:
But, when he spoke of years of bliss to be,

Of Love's sweet home, of Hymen's saffron morn,
And that lost babe which yet he deem'd unborn,
'Then from her eyes the fire of madness flash'd,
Her foot to earth th' astonish'd suppliant dash'd ;
Her anguish found a torturing voice, and spoke,
And execration in her breast awoke :—

“ No lightning blasts thee !—sleeps avenging
heaven !

Go, ask His mercy, and die unforgiven !
Nay, bloodless image of dismay'd surprise !
Start not—I cannot stab thee with mine eyes :
My hand, unweapon'd, spares thy worthless life ;
But, shouldst thou meet me when it grasps a knife,
Be deadly wan thy cheek, and slack thy knee !”

With glowing cheek, and awful energy,
She spoke her words of madness and despair ;
And Henley heard them with a madman's air.
Slowly he left her, wondering, stunn'd, appall'd.
She gasp'd—she wept ; she wish'd her words recall'd :
So weak is woe ! Worlds, worlds she would have given,
Could he have heard her pray for him to Heaven—
Could he have heard her say—“ Though base to me,
My dying lips invoke no curse on thee !
No ! live, and think of her who yet forgave,
Though sent by thee a murd'ress to the grave.
Live ! when the charms that rivall'd once the rose,
And rival now the printless snow, repose
In that deep darkness which no midnight knows—

Yes ; when the hand that oft thy lip has prest,
And this fond pillow of thy head, my breast,
And these long-tearless eyes, that *should* not weep
For one who hath no heart, shall moulder deep
In misery's sure and last asylum—live !
And may offended Heaven, like me, forgive."

Tears soothed her spirit ; and relenting thought
Half robb'd her of the dire intent she brought.
But Henley heard not—saw not—on he went,
Staggering and faint, like one with labour spent ;
And, flashing, rush'd his hot blood to his eyes.
He fell—what phantoms from the earth arise ?
A form before him stood, in sorrow deep,
And beautiful as angels when they weep.
Wan, in the arms of that fair spectre, smiled,
Cold as the breast that pillow'd it, a child,
Whose half-closed lips the lifeless teat still prest ;
And, as the grateful infant sunk to rest,
The blue eyes' languor stiffen'd into stone.
" Kiss, father, kiss thy child ! " with hollow tone
A voice exclaim'd. " One kiss, and thou art clay !
Freeze in a kiss : be cold, and come away !
Husband, a marble lip thy sands hath told :
Cold was thy heart to us, and we are cold."

He started up ; and, lo ! he was alone !
The phantom mother and the child were gone,
But not th' unutterable awe that froze
Life in its fountain, as those phantoms rose.

While the grey mountains bade adieu to day,
Slow t'wards Senena's home he wound his way,
Yet scarce knew why. His knees each other smote,
And in his soul waked gloomy thought on thought,
The darkest last. Like a bright bow unstrung
Arose the crescent moon ; but darkness hung
O'er her blue pathway, on the sky pourtray'd
In giant forms, slow moving, shade on shade.
Lo ! high in Winslow's dwelling beams a light !
Far the ray flashes through the dusky night :
Before the light a gloomy form appears,
Reclined in troubled thought, perhaps in tears.
'Twas she, he thought, in woes and wrongs array'd,
Undone and lost Senena the betray'd.
"She weeps," he said—"she weeps in her despair !"
Who wept ? Alas ! Senena was not there !
'Twas Mary, pondering by the taper's gloom
On poor Senena's crime—Senena's doom.
She deem'd the lost one at that moment slept ;
She more than fear'd her guilty, and she wept.

Senena did not sleep, she slept not yet :
But still her cheek with soothing tears was wet :
Almost she hoped that heaven might yet forgive ;
Almost she hoped, almost resolved to live ;
But, as she watch'd the quivering billows near,
Her wan cheek darken'd with unutter'd fear :
She shook and trembled like the restless wave—
At once her infant's cere-cloth and its grave.

The troubled curtains of portentous night
Flung from their brightening folds a sudden light ;
The waters seem'd to chide her as she stood !
A voice of mourning issued from the flood.
She started—on the surface rose to sight
A flower, a floating lily, blueely white :
She shriek'd—she stoop'd—she snatch'd it to the
strand ;
God ! 'twas no lily—'twas a little hand !
Forth from the brine she drew her murder'd child,
The black rocks echoing wide her accents wild ;
Close, and more close, her ice-cold babe she
press'd,
And cold was comfort to her burning breast.
She gazed upon it, (and her hot tears came,)
Call'd it her child—it had no other name—
Kiss'd its blue sodden cheek, its bosom fair,
Its small round fingers, and its dusky hair ;
Then to her heart she clasp'd its lips of snow,
And sobb'd, thrice happy in severest woe.
She wonder'd at its loveliness in death ;
Scarcely believed she that it had not breath.
Once more she bent, once more a kiss to take,
And half expected that it yet would wake.
And then the fire return'd into her brain :
And memory wept, and conscience groan'd again ;
Wild, mutter'd accents from her bosom broke,
And words came to her tongue, and misery spoke :

“My murder’d baby ! O that I had borne
The taunt of prudery, the scourge of scorn,
The penance due to sin ! Would I had taught
Thy little lip to know this breast, and bought
Thy thankful smile with love ; and o’er thee hung
To bless the name of mother from thy tongue !
Was this a mother’s deed ? Thy stifled cry
Still echoes in my soul, and will not die.
Bitter remembrance is my portion set,
Never on earth to smile or to forget ;
And I must bear perdition in my breast,
And wear my hopeless anguish as a vest.
Why did I do this deed ? Let Henley tell :
He, most unworthy, still is loved too well ;
But he shall weep when I am lowly laid,
And wish, too late, I had not been betray’d.
Canst thou forgive me, baby ? thou my child,
Canst thou forgive this wretch with blood defiled ?
Baby, forgive me ! I forgive thy sire—
O Heaven, forgive us both ! and, in thine ire,
Remember him with mercy. Let me weep
A little longer, ere I try to sleep.”

She ended ; and, with greedy eye, devour’d
Th’ expecting flood, while, on the dark heaven
lower’d
The cloud, behind which shrank the shaded moon.
“Some natural tears she dropp’d, but wiped them
soon.”

Her long-lost mother to her thought arose :
She yearn'd to meet her—where all griefs repose.
Her sister's image, with imploring hand,
Beckon'd her, shrieking, from the fatal strand :
“ Mary will weep—but she already weeps :
And, when in death the lost Senena sleeps,
Detraction will forget his useless gall,
And all-atoning death will cancel all.
Malice, herself, that watch'd my fading name,
And hail'd with devilish joy my blasted fame,
Even Malice to my grave with tears shall come,
Even Envy's self forgive me in the tomb,
Own frailty's sister to themselves allied,
And cease to taunt pride's victim with her pride.”
Did not her lover, lingering in her heart,
Bid the black shadow from her soul depart ?
She thought of Henley with the lip of scorn,
And poor Senena at his feet, forlorn,
Fall'n from the throne of innocence to shame.
Red to her cheek return'd th' indignant flame :
She wept no more, but, kneeling, look'd to heaven,
Then kiss'd her baby, and felt half forgiven.
That lifeless infant, in this direst hour,
Upheld her spirit with an arm of power,
More close she clasp'd it in a last embrace,
And plunged—still gazing on the lifeless face ;
Deeply she plunged, and o'er her closed the stream.
Forth from her pall of clouds, with sudden beam,

Casting o'er rock and wave a silvery hue,
The moon walk'd bright into the heavenly blue.
'Twas then that Henley's homeward pathway led
His footsteps near Senena's watery bed.
The moonbeam lit his wild face as he pass'd ;
The billow sigh'd his name—he stood aghast !
Perhaps Senena, in her dying pain,
Repentant, wish'd to live, but wish'd in vain !
Call'd she for help ? or, too devoutly true,
Bade she to that loved wretch a sad adieu ?
He, bending o'er the rock in dread and woe,
Beheld a snowy bosom sinking slow
Beneath the wave, that quiver'd, as to tell,
By speechless signs, a tale of horror well.
Headlong he plunged ; he grasp'd a stiffening hand ;
He dragg'd the mother and the child to land ;
Then kiss'd his victims as he wildly shook,
Imploring one sweet word, one glance, a look
Of mute forgiveness ; clasp'd her senseless frame,
And made the caverns vocal with her name,
In vain repeated. On his lap he laid
Her head, yet warm, though lifeless. He survey'd,
Intensely still, the features. Pride was there
That triumph'd over death, and in despair
Looked like defiance arm'd : the brow was knit
In sternness, and the locks that shadow'd it
So darkly, moved not ; on her lip sat pain,
Fix'd in the strength that died in struggles vain ;

The large dark eyes, half shut in last repose,
Waited, he thought, to look a curse, and close ;
And in her strong and dread embrace, she press'd
Th' unconscious infant to her beauteous breast.
He knew she named him with her dying breath ;
He deem'd she cursed him in the arms of death ;
He wrong'd, in ignorance, his murder'd love.
Powerless and agonized, he tried to move
His victims : back he fell, and senseless lay.
Again he rose ; but then the moon's last ray
Was trembling dimly in the horizon grey :
Through all his veins a deadly chillness crept,
And like a boy, the shivering giant wept.
Morn waked at length, without a cloud, and smiled
O'er wood and wave, on father, mother, child ;
When Winslow took his wonted walk, to see
The early sun quaff pearls from every tree ;
And t'wards the fatal spot advancing slow
And pausing oft, he reach'd the scene of woe.
What eye of man could view it unappall'd ;
He shriek'd in horror, and on Henley call'd ;
And Henley laugh'd in horror, from his head
Shaking the dews of night ; then on the dead
With stone-still eye-balls stared, and ghastly stood.
There is a laughter that can chill the blood ;
And, written on that brow, the wrath of fate
Tells of a ruin'd mind, a heart all desolate.

BOOK III.

On fallen Senena's grave no grass is green ;
But near it, lo ! an open grave is seen !
And mournfully amid those mourners hangs
On Winslow's arm, her sister ; and the pangs
Of sorrow live again, with strength renew'd ;
She sees the grave, she groans, in soul subdued,
And, pausing, shudders. Slow, with heavy tread,
T'wards his last home, the bearers bring the dead
In awe and silence : and with pensive air,
True to the last, Senena's dog is there.
Now on the fresh mound, recent from the spade,
Near the grave's margin Henley's bier is laid ;
And Kirk of England calmly folds the pall :
He only, tearless, stands amid them all,
Cold as the granite on some lonely tomb,
Gilt by a sunbeam in the day of gloom ;
While Elliot—and each brow is turn'd to him, ^(h)
And not a listener stirs, or lock or limb—
Faltering, with blinded eye and dewy cheek,
Beneath the gospel-oak essays to speak :—
“ *The curse of God is in the house of sin.* ⁽ⁱ⁾
Thus wisdom spoke ; and thus a voice within

(If careless mortals listen as they ought)
Speaks to the silence of admonish'd thought.
O that the grave had language ! that the dead
Could speak in thunder ! and the page unread
In every heart, unfold to every eye
What all deplore, and struggle to deny !
The grave *hath* spoken ! and the dead *do* speak !
Yes, harlot Pleasure, with the painted cheek,
Thy victims, in their deeds and in their doom,
Preach to our hearts, and teach us from the tomb ;
Loudly they tell the conscious thought within,
Yet oft in vain, that sorrow's root is sin.

“Nay, sorrowing Mary ! spare thy tears : I feel
My task is not to torture—I would heal
The soul that bears, with such a stifled groan,
So great a share in sorrows not its own.
If Heaven's just wrath the worm of sin reproves,
His wrath-like kindness chastens whom it loves.
I need not prove what each tried bosom knows—
That man is misery's heir, and born to woes.
Oh, what a lesson reads the historic page
To suffering man, in vain from age to age,
Taught by recorded ills ! And not the less
Is human being pain and weariness,
When unrecorded pass our race away,
Like forest leaves—like clouds that dim the day,
Like the flower's blush. But if the righteous here,
Though not unblest'd, shed oft a bitter tear,

Here and hereafter rich is their reward ;
While sin shall surely suffer ; and debarr'd,
By self-applauding conscience, from her heaven,
Shall suffer unconsolated, and murmur unforgiven.

“ Man, without virtue, is a sunless day ;
A midnight cloud that bursts and rolls away ;
A flag that streams the waves of battle o'er,
And sinks in fiery gloom to rise no more ;
A traveller wandering by the lightning's blaze
On cloud-clad rocks, where day would dread to gaze,
While horror listens with suspended breath,
And all around is danger, doubt, and death.

“ Thou losing gambler, by thyself betray'd,
Thy life a game, with crime and folly play'd !
If the pure bosom is a temple bless'd—
If heaven is throned in every righteous breast—
Oh, by thy throb to bask in glory's blaze !
Oh, by the passion for undying praise,
That weds thy heart to human sympathy,
And proves thee made for immortality !
Sink not beneath the deep and treacherous wave,
In which low passion plunges passion's slave ;
But swim with upward gaze on heavenly charms,
And win eternity with mortal arms.

“ Oft cloudless day, ere noon, is overcast :
Bright colours soonest fade. We know the past—
We cannot know the future. Fair we deem
Of what seems fair, and well and wisely dream

That human good can last, though change is near
To wake and mock us. And when guilt and
fear

Turn o'er th' unlook'd-on pages of the heart,
Well we may shudder if the angels start
And read in pale surprise !—In that sad tomb
Lie youth and beauty blasted in their bloom.
Let dust inform our hearts that sin is woe !
Once—but my tears *will* flow ; and let them
flow !

Nor would I be the only weeper here.
My friends, ye also weep, and well the tear
Becomes you. Jesus wept.—Ye modest maids,
Loveliest in tears, like flowers that woo the shades !
She once was bless'd and beautiful like you !
Ye pure in heart, she once was spotless too !
But, oh, when virtue flies, what demons come !
Seize on her throne, convert her light to gloom,
Pollute her altar with unholy flame,
And of her *temple* make a den of shame !
Now fall'n from fame, and lost to life, to all,
Seneca's worth seems cancell'd by her fall !
For prone to blame, and rigid in pretence,
Man forgets all things but lost innocence ;
And ne'er forgives, though Pity's self be nigh,
The time-tried wretch that mocks his prophecy !

“ But Heaven is not forgetful. God is just ;
God weighs in mercy's scale our erring dust.

This may *he* find, whose ashes there await
The last sad rite that sorrow pays to fate.
Ye knew him when no insect's gauzy wing
More lightly flutter'd o'er the blooms of spring
Than he, with thoughtless smile, and sunny eye,
O'er every leaf, and stalk of vanity,
That poison-breathing plant, with flaunting flower,
Which loves to desecrate the fairest bower.
What now avail thy sword and numerous scar,
Thou sin-slain giant, with the hand of war?
What now avails thy beauty, self-adored,
That doom'd the loved one to a death abhorr'd?
Methinks her dust should *know* thee, and upbraid
Thy perjured vow, for trusting truth betray'd;
Like that relentless soul—a shaded flame—
That, in elysium, darkens at the name
Of thankless Florence! But ye both are mute;
She cannot be defiled, nor thou pollute
The worm's pale sister. Yet, in hours like this,
Most eloquent, O Death, thy silence is!
And wordless truth, when seated on thy brow,
Proclaims—and is believed—that sin is woe!

“Was it not woe, when all-shunn'd Henley fled
From every human eye?—to hide his head
Where living thing ne'er shook a leaf, nor stirr'd
The honey'd flower, save startled humming-bird?
Where never sound disturb'd the horrid brake,
Save thrilling warning of the rattlesnake?

And ne'er to heaven was raised a glittering eye,
Except the slow-wing'd eagle's in the sky?

“ Abhorr'd by all, he fled, yet not alone ;
Senena's faithful dog, with ceaseless moan,
Follow'd his parting steps. Though oft driven back,
Spurn'd, and yet true, the dog pursued his track,
And found a welcome at his journey's end.
Senena's dog became his humble friend,
His sole companion in the dismal brake,
And soon was loved for lost Senena's sake—
The only thing on earth he now could love ;
And he would seat him in the tulip-grove
And gaze in silence on the terrier's face,
Till day, from morn to eve, had run his race.
Unsocial savage ! far from human sight—
From human sound, he urged his gloomy flight,
To rest on solitude his blasted breast ;
Farthest from man, the loneliest spot was best ;
Where sound was not, save ocean's distant roar,
And motion, save the billows on the shore.
The desert beckon'd to his mute despair ;
And if he was alone, what matter where ?
He loved to sit on crags, and hear the sound
Of his loud rifle shake the waste around ;
Leaping from rock to rock, from wood to wood,
O'er isthmus, isle, and long-resounding flood.
And had not midnight to his lone retreat,
Through starless darkness led my wandering feet,

There, where he died, 'without a hand to save,'
There would the wolf, beside the dashing wave,
Have given his shroudless limbs a living grave.

"Foot-sore, and weary, and in soul distress'd,
I was returning from the travell'd west :
The night was gloom unbroken ; and I lost
My way amid the many paths that cross'd
The dangerous forest. Long and far I went
Still more and more astray, and vainly sent
My voice for help through echoing gloom abroad.
At last a red light from a lone abode
Flash'd through the kindling verdure. Vast and
high

The building darken'd on the starless sky.
Deserted and all-tenantless it seem'd ;
And yet the brightness of a pine-fire gleam'd
Wide from the centre of the ample floor.
Apart I stood, and through the open door
Survey'd awhile in fear that vault-like room :
Its vast retiring depth was lost in gloom.
I spoke—I shouted : from disturb'd repose,
Behind the fire, a startled wretch arose,
Casting his lengthen'd shadow far aloof,
That, like a spell-raised giant, propp'd the roof ;
And, lighted from below, his features wan
Seem'd such as fear would not ascribe to man.
Like a stray'd captive by his gaoler found,
His terror utter'd a despairing sound,

While fast he grasp'd with both his hands, his
hair,

Gazing on darkness with a murderer's stare.

Thick o'er his brow one raven lock was roll'd,

And at his feet Senena's terrier howl'd.

Slow I advanced ; but, with averted look,

And arms out-stretch'd, he shrank—then stood and
shook :

An infant might have fell'd him with a flower ;

For she, whom he had wrong'd in evil hour,

Was present to his soul with dread and might ;

One, one wild thought absorb'd his spirit quite.

Faintly he said, 'I have expected thee ;

Come, let me kiss thy child, and cease to be !'

But when I named his hapless name, and grasp'd

His rugged hand, with thickening throat he gasp'd ;

He look'd—and seem'd to fear to look again ;

And torturing memory rush'd into his brain.

But when he saw the bright tear on my cheek,

And when I bade God help him, accents weak

Of thanks half-utter'd trembled on his tongue ;

Faint on my agitated arm he hung.

The voice of kindness, mighty to subdue,

Fell on his soften'd soul like heavenly dew ;

And when I pray'd for him, his *heart* look'd up ;

Hope faintly brighten'd in his bitter cup ;

He kneel'd, he kiss'd my feet, he sobb'd, he wept,

And nearer to his guest the terrier crept.

“ And oft—his only visitor—I sought
The hermit of the desert ; for I thought
That He, who died for all, might yet impart
The grace that passeth utterance to his heart ;
And alteration in his eye to me
Seem'd heaven-sent hope, and growing piety.
But weak and weaker hourly he became ;
More frequent tremors shook his faded frame ;
A deadly hectic flush'd his fallen cheek ;
His voice was changed to treble, small and weak ;
Pain in his eye subdued th' expression wild—
The Misanthrope was gentle as a child ;
And he complain'd that oft the light was green,
That blue sparks girt his bed, in darkness seen,
And that the rushes on the floor had wings,
And moved, and flew, like animated things.
Then would he mourn his nights unblest'd with
 sleep,
And bend his face upon my knee and weep,
And say that he had wished in vain to die ;
And that (although he shrunk when death seem'd
 nigh)
Oft had he gazed upon the heaving main,
And long'd to leap, and turn'd, and look'd again.
But if I pray'd him to return with me,
Then, like a wretch who strives with agony,
And deeply maim'd, prepares his final blow,
He muster'd up his strength, and answer'd ‘ No ! ’

Once, only once, his anguish sank in pray'r,
And utter'd all a broken heart's despair :—
'In doubt I lived, in horror I expire ;
Release me, O release me ! in thine ire ;
Or in thy mercy, Father, set me free !
For my eyes hate the blessèd sun to see,
That only bids my hopeless spirit mourn
O'er ill-spent hours that never can return.'

"When *last* I sought his hermit-home, no smoke
Rose o'er the hemlock huge, or greener oak.
My heart misgave me as my steps drew near,
And chill I enter'd with foreboding fear.
No voice replied to mine ; the dog had fled !
The house was tenantless, the fire was dead.
Night came in storms ; and I, perforce, must
stay,

And wait in loneliness the coming day.
O'erwearied, soon I slept ; but thunders deep
Roused me, appall'd, from unrefreshing sleep,
And the still horror of portentous dreams.
Night seem'd eternal ; and the morning beams,
As if averse to chase so foul a night,
Prolong'd their slumber in the hall of light.
But when the grey-eyed morning sweetly spread
Her dappled mantle o'er the mountain's head,
I issued from my prison-house of dread.

"The sun had not yet risen. The forest threw
Gigantic darkness on the mingled hue

Of gold and crimson in the brightening sky ;
The sea was fiery purple to the eye ;
And o'er the waves, still warring with the gale,
The moon was shining calm, and cold, and pale.
Frown'd sea and strand, but heaven divinely
smiled ;

And, cheer'd, I sought the hermit in the wild.
I reach'd his wonted station on the shore ;
I found him there ; and to the billow's roar
He seem'd to listen from his bed of sand,
His face to heaven, his head upon his hand.
I paused—and felt at heart a deadly chill :
Did ever breathing bosom lie so still ?
Wan as the ocean's foam, with unclosed eye,
As if to take his farewell of the sky,
Serene he lay in everlasting rest,
The faithful terrier pining on his breast.

“ Scarce hath the lily faded on her shroud,
Since earth's cold curtain, like a friendly cloud,
Closed o'er our sinful sister ! and the tear
Of dread and woe is damp upon her bier.
She did but go before him : he is here !

“ Yes, fallen and hapless maiden ! *he* is come
Who sent thy nameless baby to the tomb,
And led thee forth from Paradise to weep :
In silence by thy side his dust shall sleep.
Poor sufferer ! is the day of trouble past ?
And have ye reach'd a sheltering port at last ?

Ye pair whom death hath wedded ! may ye rise
From that cold bed, redeem'd, beyond the skies
To bless Eternal Mercy, when the powers
Of sin are vanquish'd ! But to us and ours,
Long shall your union be a mournful page,
In admonition rich : and youth and age
(Not taught like you) shall read with streaming eye
Your letter'd stone, and ponder solemnly.
Youth ! would'st thou end in woe ? in guilt begin ;
' The curse of God is in the house of sin.'
Look here, unholy Love ! thy victims these :
Behold thy triumphs ! thou, whose lip can freeze
The warmest bosom, blast the fairest face !
Thou who canst wed affection to disgrace,
Turn beauty's locks to horror with thy breath,
And round youth's temples bind the coronal of
death !"

The earth fell heavy on the coffin'd clay
That, deep interr'd, awaits the Judgment Day.
A sudden whirlwind shook the gospel-oak ;
White in the bay the booming billow broke ;
And there was tumult in the lurid sky,
Red battle in the clouds ; and terror's eye
Saw forms of dread through heaven's broad desert
roam ;
Close press'd the awe-struck crowd, and hurried home.
Even Kirk himself, who scorn'd the utter'd word,
A cold freethinker, simpering while he heard,

Felt his heart awed with new reflection now,
And thoughts unwelcome sadden'd on his brow.
O'er the cold dead broods silence, hush'd and deep,
And Henley slumbers where his victims sleep.



NOTES.

(a) *Cold o'er thy bosom shall the earth-worm glide.*

The idea of concluding this poem with a funeral sermon was suggested to me after hearing an oration delivered by the Rev Jacob Brettell, on the death of my early teacher, one of the most respectable of an ill-rewarded class of men—a humble schoolmaster. He was one of those unsophisticated beings whom the *improved* state of society will no longer permit to subsist among us. He was disinterestedness personified; a man of genius, of infantine kindness, of patriarchal simplicity—the gentlest and most benevolent of living creatures. Humble, pious, industrious, and resigned, “he lived and died as few can live and die;” and his appropriate epitaph would be—“Here lies the best of men, Joseph Ramsbottom.”

(b) *But thou no more, with eye refresh'd, shalt see
The long-watch'd seedling from the soil aspire.*

That fondness for flowers, which has distinguished many able men, was remarkable in Joseph Ramsbottom.

(c) *Or polyanthus, edged with golden wire.*

The distinct edge in the polyanthus is one mark of a good flower. Depth of colour is another.

(d) *When winds of midnight play
On that wild harp which well thy skill could frame.*

Joseph Ramsbottom was at once an able mathematician and ingenious mechanic. He was in the habit of amusing his few leisure hours with the construction of various nicknacks; and, among others, the Æolian harp.

(e) *For dire Metacom quell'd.*

Metacom, the celebrated “King Philip.”

“Yet be the savage in the man forgiven.”

Elliot, I am told, could not possibly have uttered this sentiment. I am, perhaps, wrong in raising him above the prejudices of the times.

"The death of Philip, in retrospect, makes different impressions from what were made at the time of the event. It was then considered as the extinction of a virulent and implacable enemy : it is now viewed as the fall of a great warrior, a penetrating statesman, and a mighty prince. It then excited universal joy and congratulation, as the prelude to the close of a merciless war : it now awakens sober reflections on the instability of empire, the peculiar destiny of the aboriginal race, and the inscrutable decrees of Heaven. The patriotism of the man was then overlooked in the cruelty of the savage ! and little allowance was made for the natural jealousy of the sovereign, on account of the barbarities of the warrior. Philip, in the progress of the English settlements, foresaw the loss of his territory and the ruin of his tribe, and made one mighty effort to prevent those calamities. Our pity for his misfortunes would be still heightened, if we could rely on the tradition, that Philip, and his chief old men, were at first averse to the war ; that he wept at the news of the first English who were killed ; and that he was pressed into those measures by the irresistible importunity of his young warriors."—*Hubbard's Narrative*.

(*f*) *Kirk, with gloomy stare,
Pernsed each sun-brown'd warrior's haughty air,
And, starting, almost fear'd rebellion there.*

"Complaints were made to the King against Massachusetts. Charles II. had not yet been proclaimed by them."—*Holmes*.

"An address to the King was agreed to, and ordered to be sent to England."—*Ibid*.

"The Court published an order the same day, forbidding disorderly behaviour on the occasion, and in a particular manner—'That no man shall presume to drink his Majesty's health, which,' the order says, 'he hath in an especial manner forbid.' This last prohibition, whatever was its origin, was very prudent. Had what was forbidden been enjoined, it might have proved too severe a test of the loyalty of the colonists—especially if what Chalmers says were strictly true, that King Charles and New England mutually

hated, contemned, and feared each other during his reign, because the one suspected its principle of attachment, and the other dreaded an invasion of privileges."—*Hutchinson*.

(g) *The moon still slumber'd o'er the gospel-oak.
Beneath whose shade Newhaven's fathers kept
Their first sweet Sabbath.*

"John Davenport, a celebrated Minister of Coleman Street, in London, accompanied by Theophilus Eaton and Edward Hopkins, merchants of London, with several other respectable persons, arrived this summer (1637) at Boston. The unmolested enjoyment of civil and religious liberty was the object of their emigration."—*Holmes*.

"Davenport, Eaton, and the rest of their company, sailed from Boston for Quinnipiac; and, in about a fortnight, arrived at the desired port. On the 18th of April they kept their first Sabbath in the place under a large, spreading oak, where Davenport preached to them."—*Holmes*.

"In the spring of the year, an order was given to the Lord Treasurer to take speedy and effectual course for the stay of eight ships then in the Thames, prepared to sail for New England. By this order, Oliver Cromwell, Sir Arthur Hazlerig, John Hampden, and other patriots, were prevented from coming to America. How limited the foresight of man—how inscrutable the counsels of God! By this arbitrary measure, Charles I., far from suspecting that the future revolutions of his kingdom were to be excited and directed by persons in such an humble sphere of life, forcibly detained the men destined to overturn his throne, and terminate his days by a violent death."—*Holmes*.

(h) *While Elliot,
Beneath the gospel-oak essays to speak.*

"On the 28th of October, 1646, the Reverend John Elliot commenced those pious and indefatigable labours among the natives which ultimately procured for him the title of the Indian Apostle. His first visit was to the Indians of Norrantum."—*Holmes*.

"On the approach of Elliot, with three other persons, Waban, a wise and grave Indian, attended by five or six others, met him, and

welcomed him and his companions into a large wigwam, where a considerable number of his countrymen attended, to hear the new doctrine. After a short prayer in English, Mr. Elliot preached a sermon of an hour's length in the Indian language, and was well understood by his attentive auditory. Many of the hearers listened to the discourse with tears. Waban received religious impressions which were never afterwards lost."—*Hutchinson*.

"The Indian translation of the New Testament, by the Rev. John Elliot, was finished this year, (1661,) printed, and dedicated to Charles II."—*Holmes*.

"The Rev. John Elliot completed his translation of the Bible in the Indian language, which was now (1664) printed in Cambridge."—*Hutchinson*.

(i) *The curse of God is in the house of sin.*

"The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked."—Prov. c. iii., v. 33.



SPIRITS AND MEN.

AN EPIC POEM.



TO JAMES MONTGOMERY, Esq., author of "The World Before the Flood," I dedicate in this fragment an evidence of my presumption and my despair.

 PREFACE.

The world before the flood has furnished four English poets with noble subjects for poetry.

"The Paradise Lost" is totally unlike all the poetry that has followed it. Even in the controversial metaphysics of his poetry, Milton has found no rival; and although Byron, in his "Cain," has combined tenderness the most touching with a lofty sublimity, still it may be said, with truth, of the Bard of our Republic, that he has never been imitated.

"Byron's "Heaven and Earth," which has furnished me with a title, is full of passages which none but he could have written; and it also affords some instances of the facility with which the noble bard could extract honey from any flower or weed, however humble. He has transcribed, almost literally, the dying words of Eugene Aram:—"What am I better than my fathers?—death is natural and necessary." He was no dramatist, but he knew how to borrow from a page which he could not have written; and in this instance he borrowed wisely. The human heart in despair furnished him with a truth which Bacon wrote long before; but Bacon wrote it unendangered and not so well.

"The Loves of the Angels" is an invaluable gem, which will

rank, not with the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," but with the "Rape of the Lock." Sometimes, indeed, we cannot help thinking that the author might have periwigged his angels with advantage. But I beg pardon—it is no longer fashionable for young coxcombs to wear wigs.

Montgomery's "World before the Flood" is deficient in action, and does not contain one well-drawn character. But the incidents are unequalled in permanent interest. Perhaps there is nothing in all poetry superior to the passage which describes the return of Cain, "When young and old went forth to meet their sire." I think the poem is too spiritual; mine, on the contrary, "is of earth, earthy." But while the eagle soars to the sun, the dog may breathe pure air on the mountains below; and, whether he be the humble friend of the beggar or the prince, still it is with man that he is familiar.

If it is asked, Why I presume to choose a subject which has already occupied all that is transcendent in genius? I answer, that I choose it for that very reason. I may reasonably think that Raphael can have no equal as a painter; but if Correggio had thought so, he could not with truth have said, "And I, too, am a painter!" Perhaps there is nothing in art which the human mind will not yet surpass, except the master-pieces of Shakspeare. What! not the sublimity of Milton? No, Milton has not surpassed Dante. But who can hope to surpass the heart-crushing pathos of Byron? Ford equalled that pathos; and who reads him? But Correggio did not surpass Raphael. True; and what then? My book, however contemptible it may be, will perhaps be better than it could have been, had I not determined to write with glorious examples before me, and in the presence, as it were, of the conquerors of Time.

A domestic critic has objected to one of the human actors in my drama of annihilation, that his actions will be opposed to his nature. But habit is a second nature, which sometimes supersedes the first, as the retouchings of a dauber can amend into discord the silent eloquence of a fine painting. In representing Baalath as naturally one of the best and noblest of human beings, my intention is to show how the exercise of despotic power perverts such natures, and compels us to reap from them calamity, instead of blessing.

I have also been seriously warned, that some of my characters are unscriptural, and therefore improper. I hope they are not liable

to this objection. The characters alluded to are four. The one most blamed is Timna, the spirit of Abel ; in whom I have wished to personify that power which is called genius. No fact being better established than that every great improvement in the condition of the human race may be traced to some mechanical invention, much of the interest of the story is founded on this fact, and on the meetings of Timna with his brother Cain, who, under the name of Shemeber, wanders homeless on the earth, deploring and suffering the consequences of his crime, yet doomed to die only with the world in which he became the first homicide. I am also blamed for giving virtues to Iambres, one of the fallen angels. Formed for incessant action, it was once his office and his delight to accompany and control the comets in their courses ; but doomed, for his revolt, to watch the gates of Eden, he steals thence, at times, to gaze unseen on the widowed Zillah, whom he loves with a pure and passionate affection, and to whose lifeless form he clings in despair, when it floats on the waters which have entombed man and his works. But the great fault of my subject is, I confess, the supposed necessity of destroying the world, in consequence of the wickedness of its inhabitants. Did the Creator do his work imperfectly? He could, or he could not, have prevented the catastrophe. After all, this is the great metaphysical difficulty, founded on the existence of evil, into which all other difficulties resolve themselves, when we attempt, with our limited faculties, to unveil the inscrutable. It is, however, a difficulty which must be met—it cannot be evaded : I have, therefore, endeavoured to represent, in the character of Joel, Christ the Creator and future Redeemer, first trying to avert, and then with almost human sympathy deploring the inevitable ruin of the work of his hands. For part of this conception, I have the poetical authority of Milton ; and it is not, I hope, though I am told it is, theologically objectionable.



SPIRITS AND MEN.

 BOOK I.

I SING of men and angels, and the days
 When God repented Him that He had made
 Man on the earth ; when crimes alone won praise ;
 When the few righteous were with curses paid,
 And none seem'd vile as they whom truth betray'd ;
 Till hope despair'd her myriad sons to save,
 And giant sin fill'd up their universal grave.

But these—are these the flowers of Paradise,
 That bloom'd when man before his Maker stood
 Off'ring his sinless thoughts in sacrifice?—
 Flowers, ye remind me of rock, vale, and wood,
 Haunts of my early days, and still loved well :
 Bloom not your sisters fair in Locksley's dell?
 And where the sun, o'er purple moorlands wide,
 Gilds Wharncliffe's oaks, while Don is dark below?
 And where the blackbird sings on Rother's side?
 And where Time spares the age of Conisbro'?—
 Sweet flowers, remember'd well ! your hues, your
 breath,
 Call up the dead to combat still with death :

The spirits of my buried years arise !
Again a child, where childhood roved I run ;
While groups of speedwell, with their bright blue eyes,
Like happy children, cluster in the sun.
Still the wan primrose hath a golden core ;
The millefoil, thousand-leaf'd, as heretofore,
Displays a little world of flow'rets grey ;
And tiny maids might hither come to cull
The woe-mark'd cowslip of the dewy May ;
And still the fragrant thorn is beautiful.
I do not dream ! Is it, indeed, a rose
That yonder in the deep'ning sunset glows ?
Methinks the orchis of the fountain'd wold
Hath, in its well-known beauty, something new.
Do I not know thy lofty disk of gold,
Thou, that still woo'st the sun, with passion true ?
No, splendid stranger ! haply, I have seen
One not unlike thee, but with humbler mien,
Watching her lord. O lily, fair as aught
Beneath the sky ! thy pallid petals glow
In evening's blush ; but evening borrows nought
Of thee, thou rival of the stainless snow—
For thou art scentless. Lo ! this finger'd flower,
That round the cottage window weaves a bower,
Is not the woodbine ; but that lowlier one,
With thick green leaves, and spike of dusky fire,
Enamour'd of the thatch it grows upon,
Might be the house leek of rude Hallamshire,

And would awake, beyond divorcing seas,
Thoughts of green England's peaceful cottages.
Yes, and this blue-eyed child of earth, that bends
Its head on leaves with liquid diamonds set,
A heavenly fragrance in its sighing sends ;
And though 'tis not our downcast violet,
Yet might it, haply, to the zephyr tell
That 'tis beloved by village maids as well.
Thou little, dusky, crimson-bosom'd bird,
Starting, but not in fear, from tree to tree !
I never erst thy plaintive love-notes heard,
Nor hast thou been a suppliant erst to me
For table crumbs, when winds bow'd branch and
stem,

And leafless twigs form'd winter's diadem :—
No, thou art not the bird that haunts the grange,
Storm-pinch'd, with bright black eyes and breast of
flame.

I look on things familiar, and yet strange,
Known, and yet new, most like, yet not the same ;
I hear a voice, ne'er heard before, repeat
Songs of the past. But Nature's voice is sweet,
Wherever heard ; her works, wherever seen,
Are might and beauty to the mind and eye ;
To the lone heart, though oceans roll between,
She speaks of things that but with life can die ;
And while, above the thundering Gihon's foam,
That cottage smokes, my heart seems still at home.

In England still—though there no mighty flood
Sweeps, like a foaming earthquake, from the clouds ;
But still in England, where rock-shading wood
Shelters the peasant's home, remote from crowds,
And shelter'd once as noble hearts as e'er
Dwelt in th' Almighty's form, and knew no guilt, nor fear.
How like an eagle, from his mile-high rock,
Down sweeps the Gihon, smitten into mist
On groaning crags, that, thunder-stunn'd, resist
The headlong thunder, and eternal shock,
Where, far below, like ages with their deeds,
The wat'ry anarchy doth foam and sweep !
Now wing'd with light, which wingèd gloom succeeds ;
Now beautiful as hope, or wild and deep
As fate's last mystery ; now swift and bright
As human joy, then black as horror's night !
And high above the torrent, yet how near,
The cottage of the woodman, Thamar, stands,
Gazing afar, where Enoch's towers appear,
And distant hills, that look on farther lands.
Beautiful cottage ! breathe thy air of balm,
Safe as a sleeping cloud, when heaven is calm !
Smile, like an exiled patriot, on the bed
Of death, with not a friend to close his eyes !—
Smile in the brightness of the sunset red,
On all that pride strives vainly to despise !
Beautiful cottage ! with an earnest tear,
My soul hath sworn grief never enter'd here.

Have I then found on earth the long-sought heav'n,
Where man's associate, Sorrow, never came ?
Where humbled sin ne'er wept to be forgiven,
And falsehood's cheek ne'er blush'd with truth and
shame ?

Alas ! lone cottage of the mountain's brow !
All that wan grief can teach thine inmates know.
I look upon the world before the flood
That vainly swept a sinful race away :—
Vainly, if tyrants still disport in blood ;
If they who toil are still the spoiler's prey ;
If war, waste, want, rebellion, now, as then,
Rave over nations, grown in folly grey ;
And earth, beneath the feet of hopeless men,
Still groaning, cries, " Redemption cometh !"—When ?
O World before the Flood ! thou answer'st not,
Though, still importunate, I question thee !
Shall I, then, paint thee, as thou seem'st afar,
Seen through the mist of years, a moral blot,
Too like the world that is, and long may be ?
Spirits and men ! Spirits that were and are !
Though worlds grow old in darkness, I will write
The drama of your deeds, with none to aid,
And none to praise my song ; not ill repaid
E'en by the pleasing labour of my choice ;
And, haply, not in vain I lift my voice,
Intent to teach the future by the past,
If truth, like death, long shunn'd, is met at last.

Yes, lonely cottage of the mountain's brow !
All that wan grief can teach thine inmates know ,
For on thy humble pallet Thamar sleeps,
And Zillah dares not hope he yet will wake ;
Pale, with her children, by his side she weeps.
Yet, yet he shall revive, and speak, and take
A last farewell of her, so true and dear,
Who watches him in hope—ah, no ! in fear !—
The victim of a dungeon's heavy breath,
And the rack's torture ; doom'd in youth to death,
Because he dared, with millions tame too long,
To murmur at misrule too long endured ;
Six years chain'd down in Enoch's dungeons strong ;
Released by seeming mercy, yet secured
By cunning vengeance, while it but set free
The thrall which death had mark'd for liberty.
Unconscious of all strife, he struggles now ;
But Zillah feels the pang that knits his brow.
Oh, how intensely still she bends above
The sire of children not yet fatherless !
Did not his lip, his bosom, feebly move ?
Did he not faintly sigh ? O happiness !
He breathes—for her he looks (but long in vain)
Who would not quit for worlds that scene of pain ;
And she bends o'er him speechless. How he tries
To utter her dear name ! Strong spasms control
His tongue ; but while the half-form'd accent dies,
His eyes meet hers, and soul is mix'd with soul ;

A thousand thoughts, the feelings of long years,
Are mingled in wild joy that hath no words, no tears !

Words came, at length, and tears were wildly shed.
“ I die at home, and thou art here,” he said ;
“ But though released, I die at home, and feel
Thy warm tears, Zillah, on my bosom cold ;
Think not that aught but fire can soften steel,
Or that, in pity, wolves relax their hold.
Oh, I have dream’d of volleyed seas, and fire,
Sad retribution, haply, yet to be !
The tyrant’s power and will obey a higher ;
And vain is human strife with destiny.
Know, from thy womb the destined twain have sprung,
On whom the fate of this doom’d world is hung.
O may their deeds, magnanimous and just,
Cancel the crimes of ages, and retrieve
The fainting hopes of man, when I am dust !—
For I must leave thee, Eva ! I must leave
Thee, my brave boy ! your sire is summon’d hence
To join Mahali, whom his innocence
Could not defend or rescue ; if, indeed,
My ill-starr’d father lives not yet fast bound
In torturing dungeons, whose slow pangs exceed
All other pangs. But, ah ! what mists surround
My swimming brain ! what means this sudden gloom ?
Take not my children from me ere I die !
I cannot see your faces. Nearer come,

Irada, yet nearer. Eva, art thou nigh?
Zillah, thy hand—my poor, ill-fated one!
I see a shade, resembling thee—'tis gone!"

He ended, and with closing eyes, that seemed
Unwillingly to veil their orbs, bereaved
Of that fair form, on which their last glance beam'd,
Sank into gentlest slumber, unperceived.
But still she listen'd, still gazed on the clay
'That, mocking life, yet mute as marble lay;
And watch'd his darkening paleness in despair.
He died in manhood's prime, nor had slow pain
Marr'd all his manly beauty; no grey hair
Reproach'd his auburn locks. Could she refrain
From cruel hope? Ah, yes: she stooping stood,
And felt in all its woe her widowhood.
She ask'd no wings, to bear her soul above,
Although her dream of earthly bliss was o'er;
But on the lips, that smiled in lifeless love,
She press'd a lip, which thenceforth smiled no
more.
She stood like Sorrow watching on a tomb.
The beauteous woe, that charm'd like shaded light,
The cheek, yet young, that knew no youthful
bloom,
Well suited her dark brow and forehead white;
And in the sad endurance of her eye
Was all that love believes of woman's majesty.

Could such a pair as this be born to bring
Creatures of toil into a world of woe?—
From such a stock undying patriots spring,
As Enoch's rebel-lord too soon may know ;
For long misrule prepares the dreadful way
Of him who brings to Baalath dismay.
While at her mother's side pale Eva bends,
And mourns her sire, with soul-appalling cries,
Even now, the son of lifeless Thamar sends
Half-utter'd threats of vengeance with his sighs.
He longs to snatch the jav'lin from the wall ;
In age a boy, in soul a man, and tall
Beyond his years, his weeping eyes flash fire :
He feels within what power assails in vain ;
His sobs repeat the last words of his sire ;
He sees but Thamar's wrongs, Mahali's chain !
Man of the future ! thou wilt do or die,
And deathless is thy wish, " Revenge and liberty ! "

Midnight was past. The children of the dead
Slept :—but the widow kiss'd his stiff'ning form,
Laid out his limbs, and wept ; then o'er him
threw

Her snowy bridal robe, and, like a worm,
Sank on his breast, convolved, but not in pain.
Lo ! when she waked to thought and grief
again,

A beauteous blue-eyed youth before her stood,
With golden ringlets, and an angel's grace,
And all the sweetness of the fair and good,
And more than mortal sorrow in his face !
On his young cheek th' unfaded rose was white,
And from his sodden hair the rain of night
Dripp'd. " Give me shelter till the morn," he cried,
" I'm tired and cold."

Zillah. Whence com'st thou, pallid one ?

Timna. From Eden's forest, where the spectres
glide.

Zil. Where is thy home ?

Tim. In heaven ! or I have none.

Zil. Where are thy parents ?

Tim. Here no love-taught bird
Is motherless like me. But thou hast heard
My Father whisper ! and it shakes th' abode
Of the archangels.

Zil. Tell me, hast thou, then,
No friends ?

Tim. Yes, many friends ; the great, good God.
The sinless spirits, and all righteous men.

Zil. Where dwell'st thou ?

Tim. Everywhere. By summer floods
I sleep. I am the guest of all the woods,
And dine in caves that give the viper birth ;
The clouds look on me from the hurried sky,
(They know their homeless brother of the earth ;)

And all the winds accost me as they fly,
Still wandering with me through the desert, glad.

Zil. Who art thou?

Tim. I am Timna, call'd the sad,
Because fond mothers still are doom'd to see
Their most unhappy sons resemble me ;—
Timna, at whose approach dull spirits flee ;
Who sits beneath the roof of amethyst,
And treads the spacious, mountain-broider'd floor :
From courts and palaces, with scorn dismiss'd,
Nor always welcomed by the friendless poor ;
But all the children of the forest know
The leveret's playmate, the lark's bed-fellow.

Instinctively the wond'ring widow took
The fragment of a loaf, her precious hoard,
Down from its shelf, and pausing, with a look
Of thoughtful sadness, laid it on the board.
“Nay,” said the youth, “I want not food, but rest !”
Then bounded into bed, and slept on Irad's
breast.

But Zillah slept not. Till the morning broke,
She watch'd, in desolation and despair,
Senseless to all but woe. The guardian oak
Moan'd o'er the roof it shelter'd ; the thick air
Labour'd with doleful sounds ; the night-bird shriek'd
Thrice ; the expiring embers harshly creak'd ;

And with strange boom mourn'd Gihon's bordering
wood,
Heard faintly ; while upon the hearth-stone grey,
The cricket of the world before the flood
Bounded unseen. But when the infant day
(While the low casement's leaves and flowers all shook
In the fresh breeze) darted a bright'ning look
On the poor cottage, and, with rosy beam,
Lit up into a smile the features pale
Of the stiff corse, she started, with a scream,
Like one who feels the earth beneath him fail ;
For, like a sweet but gather'd flower, life seem'd
To linger yet with silence and decay.
But on dark orbs the golden morning beam'd ;
And on the dead the lifeless blush still lay
So fair, so life-like, that despair was fain—
No, not to hope, but yet to weep again.
She wept, she look'd—and, lo ! her children rose
Companionless ! “ Where is the pensive one,
Who, on my Irad's breast, in sweet repose,
Lay like a flower ? ” The stranger youth was
gone !
Zillah, in fear and wonder, gazed around ;
But Timna, the lost wanderer, was not found.
“ Then hath a vision, beautiful as truth,
Deceived thee, Zillah, in the shadowy night ?
Was it a dream ? and did no angel youth,
Shake from his dripping hair the liquid light,

And utter unimaginable things?
Came he, indeed, like a strange bird, whose wings
Blaze with unearthly hues, that on the mind
Cast a bewildering glare? Or doth mine eye
See forms, to which untroubled hearts are blind?"
Perplex'd, and wonder-stricken, silently
She ponder'd thus; while, through the open door
Swift Irad ran t'wards Gihon's wooded shore,
Not without purpose; for, amid the trees,
As from the heights his rapid way he bent,
His bright curls trembling backward from the
breeze,

He saw the wondrous youth, and, wond'ring, went
To meet him. Hand in hand, along the lawn,
Lovely alike, they came. A lifeless fawn
Upon the board the graceful stranger threw;
Laid on the floor his quiver and his bow;
Dash'd from his bare and snowy feet the dew;
Stroked back the golden ringlets from his brow;
And look'd like morn, "with eyes of azure light."
"Know ye," he said, "the wanderer of the night?
Lo! He who feeds the wren, hath sent ye
food!

Behold the hunter, who, in darkness finds
Paths only trod by spirits of the wood,
And knows the secrets of the waves and winds!
Me—as the seraphim and cherubim,
Who serve whom they adore, have need of him,

As I of Him who sent me—ye will need.
Strength is vouchsafed thee, mother ! strength, to
cope

With earth and hell ; and He, from whom proceed
All perfect gifts, bids thee endure in hope.
O my sweet Irad ! I will show thee all
The wonders of the forest walks ; and we
Will hear the sky-invading mountains call
On God, in thunder. Wilt thou hunt with me ?
Oft will we chase the deer o'er dazzling snow
Above the clouds ; and thou shalt bear my bow.
Last night, methought that I was borne, with thee,
Beyond the gorgeous rainbow, through the cold,
Blue air, star-high, above a cloudy sea ;
When, lo ! bright waves of glass, with foreheads bold,
Like towers of light, in majesty arose,
Or like earth's mountains, but more vast than those :
Now, mute as mountains in their hoods of snow ;
Now, like ten thousand Gihons, crush'd and riven
And shatter'd into darkness by one blow
Of deafening fire, from end to end of heav'n.
O do not thou despise the dreams of sleep !
Dreams come from God, and oft have meanings
deep.

But know'st thou, boy, that I interpret dreams ?
I will interpret mine, when tired we lie
On some bare rock, amid the cloudless beams
Of the lone sun, while, midway in the sky,

Forms, such as live in heaven-sent visions bright,
Are dash'd, at once, from glory into night.
But righteous deeds can wash out crimes ; and ye,
The last of Abel's race, are arm'd with power
To wing with gloom or light the destined hour ;
To call down vengeance from the starless sky,
Or quench in joy the wide world's misery."

Inspired or mad the fervid wanderer wrought
Faith in his hearers. Zillah wept aloud,
In joy and grief, and marvell'd, when she thought
Of Thamar's dying words. Humbly she bow'd
Her head in silent prayer ; while Timna's face
Was clasp'd to Irad's heart, in friendship's first
embrace.

No friendly neighbour, in his sad attire,
Came to see Thamar in his last home laid :
Who soothed the children ? Who bewail'd the sire ?—
All shunn'd the house proscribed. But Eber made,
Beneath the loftiest tree that crown'd the steep,
His brother's narrow bed of lasting sleep,
And hallow'd it with curses : low and dread,
He mutter'd threats of vengeance o'er the dead.
No solemn priest the ritual grand intoned ;
No mournful bell toll'd for the doom of all ;
But o'er his lifeless form Affection moan'd,
And kings might envy Thamar's funeral :

Borne to the grave by all he loved in life,
Around him wept, son, daughter, brother, wife !
And Timna raised the sweetest voice that e'er
Was heard beneath the azure canopy :—
“ Rest, woe-worn man, that knew'st nor crime, nor
fear !

Sweet after toil is rest. Thou now art free,
Enfranchised slave ! Full well thy task is done ;
Although the fateful work is but begun ! ”

Then all was silent, save the deep-drawn sigh
And bursting sob. But soon strange sounds were
heard

That roused the echoes ; and, approaching nigh,
The sun-bright car of Baalath appear'd,
Drawn by six out-stretch'd steeds, that scorn'd the
rein,

O'er which the affrighted driver shriek'd in vain.
Groaning, with shaken forelock, each swift horse
Shot from his eyes the shiver'd light abroad,
Couch'd close his ears, and in his sightless course,
Beat up the thunder from the granite road :
Wild as the foam of Gihon, backward stream'd
The toss of frightened manes : the pale slaves scream'd
In terror for their lord. All stooping low—
With bloody whip and spur—all follow'd fast ;
And power-adoring Jared, hopeless now,
Pursued the fluctuating car, aghast,

Yet resolute with Baalath to die.
The king alone, though not to danger blind,
Sate unappall'd in kingly dignity ;
He only worthy seem'd to rule mankind.
Like brandish'd torches, steeds and chariot flash'd,
Like rushing flames, along the rugged path ;
And, lo ! th' unsleeping height, whence Gihon
dash'd

From rock to rock, a giant in his wrath !
Still onward, onward steeds and chariot blazed ;
The mourners started from their woe and gazed !
But at that moment, from the depth sublime,
A man arose, grey-hair'd, of thoughtful mien ;
Grey-hair'd, and yet no pencil-mark of time
On his fresh cheek, or lofty brow, was seen :
He, rising, like the spirit of the flood,
Said to the frantic steeds, "Stand !" and they
stood.

Jared again breathed freely ; and all eyes
Look'd on the stranger. There was in his face
Terrible beauty. Something of the skies
Seem'd mix'd up with his clay ; a heavenly grace
Awed in his action. Young, to every eye,
Yet old he seem'd ; as if eternity
Had felt the weight of years ; or gloom and light,
Deathless and coincarnate, moved and spoke ;
A human presence, with a spirit's might,
That was ere death was—yea, ere morning broke

On lands where life was not, save life that fear'd
 Nor shroud, nor worm. As when heaven's fire hath
 sear'd

The early verdure of a giant wood,
 Throned on the mountains; still the living shade
 Renews its pride, though smitten: so he stood—
 Like placid Jove, in marble undecay'd,
 Gazing on time, with death-defying eye,
 And throning on his brow divinity.

The king descended from the arrested car;
 The monarch was forgotten in the man;
 And, as a friend with friend familiar,
 Swift to embrace that form divine, he ran,
 And shook his calm preserver by the hand;
 Then, turning coldly, he resumed the king,
 And, pausing, spoke:—"But if an angel's wing
 Had swept us from the abyss, and on the land
 Placed us in safety, still we could have said
 But this—that, everywhere, the royal head
 Hath heavenly guardians. Man, what is thy
 name?"

Joel. My name is Joel.

Baalath.

Well, so let it be.

But not, perchance, the exile!—No?

Joel.

The same.

Baalath. No more an exile, then—I pardon
 thee.

Now, ask a boon, and on my royal word,
It shall be thine.

Joel. Let Enoch's flatter'd lord,
For once, hear truth. This is the boon I crave.

Baalath. Who yet e'er lied to Baalath, and wore
His head a fortnight? The presumptuous slave!
Well, let us hear, what kings ne'er heard before,
That slaves are grateful. When?—e'en when thou
wilt.

He smiled, and yet his right hand sought the hilt
Of his keen sword. Smiling, he turn'd away,
'To hide the rage that shook his inmost soul;
And, while the mourners linger'd yet, to pay
'The debt of love and grief, with troubled scowl
Approach'd them, follow'd by his guards. He
stood

Beside the grave; he trembled, and the blood
Rush'd to his heart. "Widow! I come too late,
And yet I came to pardon and to save;
But all men, kings themselves, must bow to fate.
I cannot call thy husband from the grave;
But I would dry thy tears. Behold in me
Thy king and friend: nor destitute is she
On whom the royal condescension turns
An eye of favour. With a doubting frown,
Thy son beholds me. In his bosom burns
The spirit that I like. Though born a clown,

Yet if a clown he die, be his the blame.
I will advance him to the height of fame,
Honour, and wealth ; and Eva shall repair
To Enoch's marble halls. She was not born
To waste her sweetness on the desert air."
Zillah looked up ; but sorrow conquer'd scorn.
She tried to speak ; but her lip, quivering, fell.
Then in sweet tones, but deep and terrible,
Timna, like truth denouncing guilt, address'd
Th' astonish'd son of Hamath the severe.

“Thou bane and terror of a land oppress'd !
King by thy sire's successful treason, hear !
'Too soon, dost thou forget what causes laid
Methuliel at a subject's feet, betray'd !
That evil comes of evil, multiplied
Still by its increase, till endurance fling
His burden at the feet of tyrant pride,
And vengeance, hallow'd by long suffering,
Arraying havock under all the sky,
Woe's dreadful cure is its enormity !
Pleased with thy people's bane, thy law of force,
Thou gazest smiling on a realm undone,
And know'st not that thou gazest on a corse,
Whose features swell and redden in the sun,
While the worms' motion, in their hungry strife,
Makes an abhorr'd caricature of life.
See where, unseen, their loathsome feast they share !
See !—why wilt thou not see that death is there ?

But, last of Cain's blind race, thou worse than blind.
Hark ! there are whispers in the boding wind !
Thy victims bid me speak their murderer's doom.
Truth, told to thee, shall be to thee a lie,
And falsehood truth. Friendship and love shall
bloom

Like venomous flowers to thee : thy jaundiced eye,
Hating their innocence, shall gloat on weeds ;
For cherish'd foes shall rule thee and thy deeds ;
And thou on Danger's lap thy rest shall take,
Till, thunder-stunn'd, thou wake aghast, to gaze
On lightnings that the earth's deep centre shake ;
Then rush, for very dread, into the blaze—
Dead, with a single shriek ! while all who hear
That one wild yell die also—kill'd by fear.”
He spoke ; and Eva swoon'd on Timna's breast,
And Baalath turn'd black with jealous ire ;
Avenging furies tore his heart unblest'd,
And scar'd his frantic veins with poison'd fire.
Mute stood the guards ; on them a new light broke,
And slumb'ring mischief in their souls awoke,
While Jared from the scabbard flash'd his sword,
And Timna smiled, like faith, to die prepared ;
But Baalath's commanding nod restored
To Jared's thigh the weapon rashly bared.
“ Woe's words,” he said, “ like swords, are blind and
sharp :
We ask not music from a broken harp.

Our visit is ill-timed." He spoke, and turn'd,
And climb'd his chariot, while his humbled pride
Felt that a despot in his vitals burn'd
Who fear'd not kings. Then down the mountain's
side,
And through the glens, with flowers and verdure gay,
T'wards Enoch's thousand towers he wound his way.
Beyond the valleys, and their hermit streams,
Far on the mountain-girded plain they shone,
Above the smoky ocean, which the beams
Of evening painted. Gihon flow'd alone,
Unseen, beneath the hated curtain deep,
Where deeds were done "that made the angels weep."
While they beheld, in heav'nly sadness bow'd,
That wilderness of homes, that desert of the crowd.



THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

TO HENRY BROUGHAM, Esq., the Friend of the Poor, and the Champion of Education, as a humble Tribute of Respect and Gratitude for his efforts in the great cause of Humanity, this tale of Enoch Wray (the incarnation of a century) is dedicated by the Author.

EXORDIUM.

Monopoly ! if every funeral bough
Of thine be hung with crimes too foul to name ;
Accursed of millions ! if already thou,
Watch'd by mute vengeance and indignant shame,
Art putting forth thy buds of blood and flame,*
What will thy fruitage be? No matter—wave
Thy branches o'er our hearts ! and, like a pall,
Let thy broad shadow darken Freedom's grave !
Not yet the Upas of the Isles shall fall,
If ought shall stand. Spread, then, and cover all !
Fear'st thou the axe? Long since the feller died ;
And thou art deaf to thunder. But, Black Tree !
Thine own fruits will consume thee in thy pride !

* But what can the Grand Bashaws of any nation have to fear from the discontent of six, or eight, or ten, or twelve millions of paupers? The multitude have ever been as a flock of sheep, whether they offer their wool to the shears or their throats to the knife. "God curse these Christian dogs !" said Kaled—"they tire my arm." "Confound these Rebels !" cries the Orange Squire. "Let us *ride* them down ; they are but six millions." "The thicker the hay the easier mown," said Alarie ; and he, too, was a barbarian.

O may thy inbred flame blast nought but thee,
 When burns the beacon which the blind shall see !
 Meantime, I make my theme the toil and grief
 That water thee with tears—the fear and hate
 Whose mutter'd curses fan thy deadly leaf—
 Sad, silent changes—burning wrongs, that wait
 To hear Delusion scream at Rapine's gate,
 “ Our master's cause is lost, and Hell's undone ! ”



THE VILLAGE PATRIARCH.



CONTENTS.

Continued Frost—Enoch Wray leaves his Cottage on a Visit to the Neighbouring Town—His Blindness and Poverty—His Familiarity with the old Roads of the Country—His Perplexity in the Town—Changes there—Rural Names of some of the Streets—Country-born Widow and Her Attempts at a Garden—Her Consumptive Boy, and His Flowers—Female Artisans Singing Hymns at their Labour—Meeting of Enoch Wray and his old Blind Servant.

BOOK I.

I.

THROUGH fiery haze broad glares the angry sun ;
 The travell'd road returns an iron sound ;
 Rings in the frosty air the murderous gun ;
 The fieldfare dies ; and heavy to the ground,
 Shot in weak flight, the partridge falls—his wound

Purpling with scatter'd drops the crusted snow.
Loud thumps the forge ; bright burns the cottage fire,
From which the tilter's lad is loth to go ;
Well pleased the tramper sees the smoke aspire ;
High flies the swan ; each wild strange bird is shyer,
And, terror-taught, suspects hill, vale, and plain.

II.

Our poor blind father grasps his staff again—
O Heav'n ! protect him on his way alone !
Of things familiar to him, what remain ?
The very road is changed ; his friend, the stone
On which he wont to sit and rest, is gone ;
And ill the agèd blind can spare a friend !

III.

How lone is he, who, blind and near his end,
Seeks old acquaintance in a stone or tree !
All feeling and no sight ! O let him spend
The gloaming hour in chat with memory !
Nor start from dreams to curse reality,
And friends more hard and cold than trees and
stones !

IV.

He takes the townward road, and inly groans
At men, whose looks he does not see, but feel ;
Men whose harsh steps have language ! cruel tones

That strike his ear and heart, as if with steel !
There dwelt they, ere Corruption's brazen seal
Stamp'd power's hard image on such dross as theirs ?

V.

Thou meanest thing that Heav'n endures and
spares !
Thou upstart dandy, with the cheek of lead !
How dar'st thou from the wall push those grey
hairs ?
Dwarf ! if he lift a finger, thou art dead :
His thumb could fillip off thy worthless head—
His foot, uplifted, spurn thee o'er the moon !

VI.

“Some natural tears he drops, but wipes them
soon ;”
And thinks how changed his country and his kind,
Since he, in England's and in manhood's noon,
Toil'd lightly and earn'd much ; or, like the wind,
Went forth o'er flowers, with not a care behind,
And knew nor grief, nor want, nor doubt, nor fear.

VII.

Beadle ! how canst thou smite, with speech severe,
One who was revered long ere thou wast born ?
No homeless, soulless beggar meets thee here,

Although that threadbare coat is patch'd and torn :
His bursting heart repels thy taunt with scorn,
Bút deems thee human, for thy voice is man's.

VIII.

You, too, proud dame, whose eye so keenly scans
The king's blind subject on the king's high road !
You who much wonder that, with all our plans
To starve the poor, they still should crawl abroad !
Ye both are journeying to the same abode.
But, lady, your glad eye, o'er wave, and shore,
And shoreless heaven, with sightless speed may rove,
And drink resplendent joy ; while he no more
Shall look on Nature's face : Rock, river, grove,
Hate's withering frown, the heart-sent blush of love,
Noon, midnight, morning, all are dark to him !

IX.

Thou, skater ! motion-poised, may'st proudly swim
In air-borne circles o'er the glassy plain,
While beauty lauds thy graceful sweep of limb ;
But to the blind, alas ! her praise is pain :
It but recalls his boyish days in vain,
When he too, seen and praised, could see and
praise.
To him there is no beauty but the heart's,
No light but that within ; the solar blaze

For him no colour to the rose imparts ;
The rainbow is a blank ; and terror starts
No ghost in darkness thicker than his own.

X.

Yet sweet to him, ye stream-loved valleys lone.
Leafless, or blossoming fragrant, sweet are ye !
For he can hear the wintry forest groan,
And feel the grandeur which he cannot see,
And drink the breath of Nature, blowing free.
Sweet still it is through fields and woods to stray ;
And fearless wanders he the country wide,
For well old Enoch knows each ancient way ;
He finds in every moss-grown tree a guide—
To every time-dark rock he seems allied :
Calls the stream “ sister ! ” and is not disown’d.

XI.

Usurper of the hills ! hast thou dethroned
The regal oak ? He bows his honours hoar,
Too conscious of his fall, in vain bemoan’d ;
He yields to thee, storm-loving sycamore !
And on the inland peak, or sea-beat shore,
Thou reign’st alike. But thee, though yonder hill
Stoops to thy height, our father planted here ;
And still he loves thy palmy shade, and still,

E'en when the snow-flake plumes thy branches sere,
He climbs the age-worn road that lingers near,
And seems, though blind, on distant hills to gaze.

XII.

But much he dreads the town's distracting maze,
Where all, to him, is full of change and pain.
New streets invade the country ; and he strays,
Lost in strange paths, still seeking, and in vain,
For ancient landmarks, or the lonely lane
Where oft he play'd at Crusoe, when a boy.
Fire vomits darkness, where his lime-trees grew ;
Harsh grates the saw, where coo'd the wood-dove coy ;
Tomb crowds on tomb, where violets droop'd in
dew ;

And, brighter than bright heaven, the speedwell blue
Cluster'd the bank, where now the town-bred boor
(Victim and wretch, whose children never smile,)
Insults the stranger, sightless, old, and poor,
On swill'd Saint Monday, with his cronies vile,
Drunk for the glory of the holy isle,
While pines his wife, and tells to none her woes !

XIII.

Here, Enoch, flaunts no more the wild brier rose,
Nor basks the lizard here, or harmless snake.
No more the broom, in spring, all golden glows

O'er the clear rill, that, whimpering through the
brake,

Heard thy blythe youth the echoing vale awake.

All that was lovely then is gloomy now.

Then, no strange paths perplex'd thee—no new
streets,

Where draymen bawl, while rogues kick up a row ;

And fishwives grin, while fopling fopling meets ;

And milk-lad his rebellious donkey beats ;

While dwarfish cripple shuffles to the wall ;

And hopeless tradesman sneaks to alehouse mean ;

And imps of beggary curse their dad, and squall

For mammy's gin ; and matron, poor and clean,

With tearful eye, begs crust for lodger lean ;

And famish'd weaver, with his children three,

Sings hymns for bread ; and legless soldier, borne

In dog-drawn car, imploreth charity ;

And thief with steak from butcher runs forlorn ;

And debtor bows, while banker smiles in scorn ;

And landed pauper, in his coach and four,

Bound to far countries from a realm betray'd,

Scowls on the crowd, who curse the scoundrel's
power,

While coachee grins, and lofty lady's maid

Turns up her nose at bread-tax-paying trade,

Though master bilketh dun, and is in haste.

XIV.

Changed scenes, once rural—changed, and not
defaced !

Far other woes were yours in time of old,
When Locksley o'er the hills of Hallam chased
The wide-horn'd stag, or with his bowmen bold
Waged war on kinglings. Vassal robbers prowld,
And, tiger-like, skulk'd robber lords for prey,
Where now groan wheelworn streets, and labour bends
O'er thousand anvils. Bled the feudal fray,
Or raved the foray, where the cloud ascends
For ever ; and from earth's remotest ends
Her merchants meet, where hamlets shriek'd in
flames.

XV.

Scenes, rural once ! ye still retain sweet names,
That tell of blossoms and the wandering bee :
In black Pea-Croft no lark its lone nest frames ;
Balm-Green, the thrush hath ceased to visit thee !
When shall Bower-Spring her annual corncrake see,
Or start the woodcock, if the storm be near ?

XVI.

But, mourning better days, the widow here
Still tries to make her little garden bloom—
For she was country-born. No weeds appear,

Where her poor pinks deplore their prison-tomb ;
To them, alas ! no second spring shall come !
And there, in May, the lilac gasps for breath ;
And mint and thyme seem fain their woes to speak,
Like saddest portraits, painted after death ;
And spindling wallflowers, in the choking reek,
For life, for life uplift their branches weak.
Pale, dwindled lad, that on her slated shop
Sett'st moss and groundsel from the frosty lea !
O'er them no more the tiny wren shall hop.
Poor plants !—poor child ! I pity them and thee !
Yet blame I not wise Mercy's high decree.
They fade—thou diest ; but thou to live again—
To bloom in heav'n. And will thy flowers be there ?
Heav'n without them, would smile for thee in vain.
Thither, poor boy, the primrose shall repair,
There violets breathe of England's dewy air,
And daisies speak of her, that dearest one,
Who then shall bend above thy early bier,
Mourning her feeble boy for ever gone,
Yet long to clasp his dust for ever here !
No, no, it shall not want or flower or tear !
In thy worn hand her sorrow will not fail
To place the winter rose, or wind-flower meek ;
Then kiss thy marble smile, thy forehead pale,
But not the icy darkness from thy cheek ;
Then gaze—then press her heart that yet shall break ;
And feebly sob—“ My child, we part to meet ! ”

XVII.

Hark ! music still is here ! How wildly sweet,
Like flute-notes in a storm, the psalm ascends
From yonder pile, in traffic's dirtiest street !
There hapless woman at her labour bends,
While with the rattling fly her shrill voice blends ;
And ever, as she cuts the headless nail,
She sings—" I waited long, and sought the Lord,
And patiently did bear." A deeper wail
Of sister voices joins, in sad accord—
" He set my feet upon his rock adored !"
And then, perchance—" O God, on man look down !"

XVIII.

And Enoch seeks, with pensive joy, the town ;
For there his brother in misfortune dwells,
The old and sightless sawyer, once his own.
They meet—with pride and grief his bosom swells ;
And how they once could see, each sadly tells.
But Charles is changed ; and Enoch's bosom bleeds
To mark the change. Though aged but eighty years,
Bedrid and blind, the sorrowing sawyer needs
All friendly aid. Crack'd, on the wall, appears
His famous violin. No rival fears
His trembling hand, which never more shall call
The young, the gay, the manly, and the fair,
To penny hop or rustic festival !

No fading prude again shall curl her hair,
Nor fop new whiskers buy, nor age repair
To hear him charm the loveliest of the land.
The tear is trembling in our father's eye ;
Kindly he takes his ancient servant's hand,
Stoops to his whisper, to his feeble sigh
Sighs ; and, with hands uplifted reverently,
And heav'nward eyes, upon his bended knees,
Implores the Father of the poor to spare
His pious friend, and cure his long disease ;
Or give him strength his painful load to bear,
That, dying, he may show " what good men are :"
For Thou disdain'st not pray'r from lowly walls.
The squalid hovel, where the poor and just
Kneel, is, in thy sight, splendid as the halls
Where pray the proud — with contrite hearts, I
trust—

Then highest when they know they are but dust.
O God ! continue to thy grateful son
The grace which thou hast never yet denied
To humble faith, that bids thy will be done !
And let it still, in meekness, be his pride
To praise thy name, and hear it glorified !
Poor is thy son, and blind, and scorn'd, like me ;
Yet thee we bless, that he can proudly say
He eats the hoarded bread of industry,
And that he hath not, in his evil day,
Tasted the bitterness of parish-pay.

Though frail thy child, like all who weep below,
His life, thou know'st, has been no baneful weed ;
He never gather'd where he did not plough,
He reap'd not where he had not scatter'd seed ;
And Christ, we know, for sinners deign'd to bleed !
At *thy* tribunal want may be forgiv'n ;
There, to be lowly is not to be base.
Oh, then—if equal, in the eye of Heav'n,
Are all the children of the human race ;
If pomp and pride have in thy courts no place—
Let humble friends, who long have sojourn'd here
In love united, meet in love again,
Where dust, divorced from sin, and pain, and fear,
In ever-bless'd communion shall remain,
With powers that know not death, nor grief, nor stain,
Warbling to heav'nly airs the grateful soul !



BOOK II.

CONTENTS.

A Fine Day in Winter—Enoch Wray seated in the Sunshine at his Cottage Door—His neglected Garden a Symptom of Poverty—The Condition of the Poor changed for the worse since the Patriarch was young—Great Events of his Time—Invasion of England by the Pretender—American War—French Revolution—Napoleon.

I.

Thou call'st the Village Patriarch to his door,
Brief, brilliant summer of a winter's day !
While the sweet redbreast, minstrel of the poor,
Perch'd on the blossoming hazel, trills his lay,
To cheer that blind, good man, old Enoch Wray.
Behold our Father, still unbow'd by time !
Eld with his gentle locks full gently plays ;
And pain, in reverence, spares the man sublime :
How few such men grace these degenerate days !
E'en Death, though fain to strike, in awe delays,
As if immortal age defied his might.
Lo ! where the peeping primrose comes again,
To see his sad, bright eyes, that roll in night,
While melts the hoar-frost on the cottage pane,
And dew-drops glitter in the lonely lane !

Calm, as of old, with not one hoary hair
Changed, thou art listening for the vernal bee ;
Thy fingers, like the daisy's petals fair,
Spread to the sun, that loves to look on thee—
Thou almost god-like in thy dignity !
Hark, how the glad rill welcomes thee with pride !
Ye have been friends and neighbours five-score
years—

Father ! the stream still loiters at thy side,
And still unchanged by envious time appears ;
Like human life, it flows, a stream of tears—
But not to pass, like human life, away.

II.

What, though thy locks of venerable grey
Claim not with yon wild cliffs coeval date,
Yet, blind old man, shake hands with them, for they
Are dark like thee ; and, by an equal fate,
They too, enduring long, shall perish late.
Thou see'st not Winco, in his dusky cap,
Lean'd on his elbow, as becomes his years,
With all the past beneath him, like a map,
O'er which he bends and ruminates in tears ;
But how like thee that woe-marked hill appears !
Ye are not changeless, though ye long endure,
And Eld herself sees but what still hath been,
In him and thee. Nor art thou yet mature

And ripe for death, but strong in age and green,
And alter'd less than this pathetic scene.
The cottage, where thy sire and his were born,
Seems, as of old, a hillock in the vale :
But many a chink admits the breezy morn ;
Neglect long since divorced the jasmine pale
That clasp'd thy casement ; and the sorrowing gale
Sighs o'er the plot where erst thy choice flowers
bloom'd.

Ah ! when the cottage garden runs to waste,
Full oft the rank weed tells of hopes entomb'd,
And points at man, once proud, now scorn'd, debased !
The dogs bark at him ; and he moves, disgraced,
O'er wither'd joys which spring shall ne'er renew.

III.

Yet here, e'en yet, the florist's eye may view
Sad heirs of noble sires, once dear to thee ;
And soon faint odours, o'er the vernal dew, ^(a)
Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
Hither, with music sweet as poesy,
To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold.

IV.

But on thy brow, O ne'er may I behold
Sadness !—Alas, 'tis there, and well it may !
For times are changed, and friends grow scarce and
cold !

O let not want "his ready visit pay"
To sightless age, that knew a better day !
O may no parish crust thy lips profane !

v.

Man, poor and blind, who liv'st in worse than
pain !

Where'er thou art, thou helpless, wingless owl !

The worm, our eyeless sister, might disdain

Thee, subject to thy fellow's proud control.

But what a worm is he, the blind in soul,

Who makes, and hates, and tortures penury !

Ah ! who shall teach him mercy's law sublime ?

He who can sever wo and poverty,

Or pride and power, or poverty and crime ;

He who can uninstruct the teacher, Time.

Oh, yet erect, while all around are bow'd,

Let Enoch Wray's majestic pride remain,

A lone reproach, to sting the meanly proud,

And show their victims—not, perhaps, in vain—

What Britons have been, and may be again.

O Age and Blindness, why should you be pair'd ?

O sisters three, worst fates, Want, Blindness, Age !

Hope look'd from heav'n, beheld you, and des-
paired ?

But now she rends her hair, in grief and rage ;

Her words are prophecy, her dreams presage

Evil to serf and lord ; for want hath sworn
Thus, to the delver of the perilous mine,
And him who wakes with scrating file the morn—
“ By the sad worm that dies not, I am thine,
And mine art thou ; thy joys shall still decline
Till death ; thy woes increase till death—toil on ! ”

VI.

But why forestall our griefs ? Dark thoughts, begone !
Sufficient is its evil for the hour.
The verdant leaves drop from us one by one ;
We need not shake them down. Life's weeping
flower
Droops soon enough, however slight the shower ;
And hope, unbidden, quits our fond embrace.

VII.

I *will* not read dejection in thy face,
Nor aught save tranquil hope and gentle doom ;
But deem thee parent of a happy race,
Thy slumbers peaceful, distant yet thy tomb ;
And, in thy autumn, late the rose shall bloom.
Come, let us walk, as we have often walk'd,
Through scenes beloved, that whisper of the past ;
And talk to me, as thou hast often talk'd,
Of wingèd hours, too happy far to last,
When toil was bliss, and thrift could gather fast

Funds to sustain his long life's tranquil close ;
When faces wore no masks, and hearts were glad ;
When freedom's champions were not labour's foes ;
When no man deem'd the wise and honest mad ;
And Pope was young, and Washington a lad.
Thou to the past can'st say, " Rise, live again ! "
For, Enoch, well rememb'rest thou the time
When Britons till'd the Eden of the main,
Where manly thoughts were utter'd, e'en in rhyme,
And poverty was rare, and not a crime.
What envied England was, long years ago,
That times are alter'd, thou can'st truly tell ;
And, if thy thoughts are flowers that bloom in snow—
If with the present and the past they dwell—
Then, of the lifeless, like a passing bell,
Speak to the living, ere they perish, too.
If memory is to thee a precious book,
Brightest where written first, and brightly true,
Turning the pictured pages, bid me look
On sunny meadow and rejoicing brook,
And toil-brown'd labour, as the throstle gay.

VIII.

Thou weapest, sightless man, with tresses grey !
But wherefore weep o'er ills thou can'st not cure ?
The darkest hour will quickly pass away,
And man was born to suffer and endure.
But, come what may, *thy* rest is near and sure :

Thy bed is made, where all is well with all
Who well have done. Then, Enoch, cease to mourn !
Lift up thy voice, and wake the dead ! Recall
The deeds of other days ! and from the urn
Of things which were, shake words that breathe and
burn.

O'er the dark mantle of the night are shed
Sparks of the sun, in starry spangles proud :
In showery spring, when morn his radiant head
Veils, the rich broom, with glittering diamonds bow'd,
Is sunny light beneath the sunless cloud.
Though Nature to thine eye is vainly fair,
Green laugh the seasons, and the laughing light
Is verdant in thy soul—the flower is there
That wither'd four-score years ago, still bright,
And bathed in freshness by the dewy air.
And pitying spirits to thine ear repair
With tales, to which unsorrowing hearts are deaf ;
And deeds, whose actors live not, live with thee ;
Still laugh and weep long buried joy and grief
Which, speaking with thine eloquent tongue, shall be,
When thou art gone, alive to memory.
Thus to great men their country—when the bust,
The urn, the arch, the column fail—remains ;
For ever speaks of godlike deeds the dust
Which feet immortal trod ; and rocks, and plains,
When History's page no symbol'd thought retains,
Hear dim tradition talk of deathless men.

IX.

Bright on the storm-swoll'n torrent of the glen
Is angry sunset ; bright, and warm, and strong,
Are the rich visions which the poet's pen
Clothes in sweet verse ; but brighter is the song
Of truth unwritten, from our fathers' tongue.
Ah ! who starts now at Balmerino's name,
Which England heard pronounced in dreams, and
 woke ?

Then every mountain had a voice of flame ;
Blue Kinderscout to starting Snailsden spoke,
And fiery speech from troubled Stanedge broke.
Tell, Enoch, yet again, of that huge tree,
Old as the hills ; that tree to whose broad shade
Your herds were driv'n, when age and infancy,
The thoughtful matron, and the weeping maid,
Fled through the gloom where lonest Rivilin stray'd.
Speak of the cellar and the friendly well
In which thy mother, trembling, hid her plate ;
The ancient cup, whose maker none can tell ;
The massive tankard used on days of state ;
And coins long hoarded, all of sterling weight.
Say how retired the robbers, disarray'd ;
Boast of the arms thy sire was proud to wield ;
Draw from its sheath, in thought, the trusty
 blade

That drove rebellion o'er Culloden's field,
Opposed in vain by Highland dirk and shield ;
And feel the blood-rust on its splendour keen !

X.

Then wing my spirit to a grander scene ;
Let burning thoughts and words for utterance throng ;
And bid me mark—though clouds will intervene
To veil the waters swift, and wild, and strong—
How pours the tide of human fate along.
Tell of sad strife with Britain's sons, who trod
Earth's virgin soil, beyond the sun-loved wave ;
Men—owning no superior but their God,
Strong as their torrents, as their eagle, brave—
Who dug with Freedom's sword Oppression's grave !
Tell, too, of him, the warrior-sage, whose deeds
Uncursed the future, and enfranchised man !
But ah ! not yet—Time's darkest hour succeeds,
Unmatch'd in woe since life and death began !
For Evil hath her place in Mercy's plan,
And long will furnish themes for mournful rhymes.

XI.

Speak !—if thy soul, too full of ancient times,
Will condescend of later deeds to tell—
Speak of the day of blood, the night of crimes,
The moral earthquake, and the earthly hell,
When slaves smote tyrants served too long and well.

Say how attention listen'd, pale, in heav'n,
When—madden'd by Abaddon's legion brands,
And too, too deeply wrong'd to be forgiv'n—
They found redemption in their own right hands,
Purged with retorted fire their demon'd lands,
And clad in fresher green the calcined sod.

XII.

Nor him forget, the stripling demi-god,
Before whose glance the herded nations fled.
Tell how he crush'd the mountains with his nod,
Walk'd on the storm, and to convulsion said,
“Be still, thou babbler!” Tell how he who read
The doom of kings fail'd to foresee his own.
He placed upon his head the crown of steel;
But dream'd he of his grave in ocean lone?—
Toussaint! thy foe was doomed thy pangs to feel:
On jailer-England and on him her seal
Hath History set. For ocean's waste of waves
Fenced not his throne from million hostile swords;
Therefore he built on multitudinous graves
A tyrant's power, and strove to bind with cords
Thought; for she mock'd him with her wing of
words
That withers armies. Who shall credit thee,
Genius? Still treacherous, or unfortunate,
Victim, or wronger! Why must Hope still see

Thy pinions, plumed with light divine, abate
Their speed when nearest heav'n, to uncreate
Her glorious visions ? Ay, since time began,
Creatures, with hearts of stone and brains of clay,
Scorning thy vaunt to wing the reptile, man,
O'er thee and thine have held barbarian sway ;
And in the night which yet may have its day,
(The night of ages, moonless, starless, cold,)
If the rare splendour of the might of mind
Hath sometimes flash'd o'er plagues and errors old,
It flash'd but to expire, and leave behind
A deadlier gloom. But woodbine wreaths are twined
Round thorns ; and praise, to merit due, is paid
To vulgar dust, best liked when earthy most.
While Milton grew, self-nourish'd, in the shade,
Ten Wallers bask'd in day. Misrule can boast
Of many Alvas ; Freedom, oft betray'd,
Found her sole Washington. To shine unseen,
Or only seen to blast the gazer's eye ;
Or struggle in eclipse, with vapours mean,
That quench your brightness, and usurp the sky ;
Such, meteor spirits ! is your destiny,
Mourn'd in times past, and still deplored in these.

BOOK III.

CONTENTS.

Comparative Independence of Skilled Labour—Fine Sabbath Morning—Sunday Stroll of the Townsman—Coach-race—Misery and Misfortunes of the Poor—Congregation leaving the Village Church—Old Mansion—Country Youth working in the Town—Poacher of the Manufacturing Districts—Concluding Reflections.

I.

Ere Bedford's loaf or Erin's sty be thine,
Cloud-rolling Sheffield ! want shall humble all.
Town of the unbow'd poor ! thou shalt not pine
Like the fall'n rustic, licensed Rapine's thrall ;
But, first to rise, wilt be the last to fall !
Slow are thy sons the pauper's trade to learn.
Though, in the land that blossoms like the rose,
The English peasant and the Irish kerne
Fight for potatoes—thy proud labourer knows
Nor Workhouse wages, nor the exile's woes.
Not yet thy bit of beef, thy pint of ale,
Thy toil-strung heart, which toil could ne'er dismay,
Nor yet thy honest, skill'd right hand shall fail ;
Last, from thy hearths, the poor man's pride shall
 stray ;
And still shall come thy well-paid Saturday,
And still thy morn of rest be near and sure.

II.

Light ! all is not corrupt, for thou art pure,
Unchanged, and changeless. Though frail man is vile,
Thou look'st on him—serene, sublime, secure,
Yet, like thy Father, with a pitying smile.
Light ! we may cloud thy beams, but not defile.
Even on this wintry day, as marble cold,
Angels might quit their home, to visit thee,
And match their plumage with thy mantle, roll'd
Beneath God's throne, o'er billows of a sea
Whose isles are worlds, whose bounds infinity.
Why then is Enoch absent from my side ?
I miss the rustle of his silver hair ;
A guide no more, I seem to want a guide,
While Enoch journeys to the house of pray'r ;
And ne'er came Sabbath day but he was there !
Lo, how like him, erect and strong, though grey,
Yon village tower, time touch'd, to God appeals !
But hark ! the chimes of morning die away !
Hark !—to the heart the solemn sweetness steals,
Like the heart's voice, unfelt by none who feels
That God is love, that man is living dust ;
Unfelt by none whom ties of brotherhood
Link to his kind ; by none who puts his trust
In nought of earth that hath survived the flood,
Save those mute charities, by which the good
Strengthen poor worms, and serve their Maker best.

III.

Hail, Sabbath ! day of mercy, peace, and rest !
Thou o'er loud cities throw'st a noiseless spell.
The hammer there, the wheel, the saw, molest
Pale thought no more. O'er trade's contentious
hell

Meek quiet spreads her wings invisible.
But when thou com'st, less silent are the fields
Through whose sweet paths the toil-freed townsman
steals.

To him the very air a banquet yields.
Envious, he watches the poised hawk, that wheels
His flight on chainless winds. Each cloud reveals
A paradise of beauty to his eye.
His little boys are with him, seeking flowers,
Or chasing the too venturous gilded fly.
So by the daisy's side he spends the hours,
Renewing friendship with the budding bowers ;
And—while might, beauty, good, without alloy,
Are mirror'd in his children's happy eyes—
In his great temple, offering thankful joy
To Him, the infinitely Great and Wise,
With soul attuned to Nature's harmonies,
Serene, and cheerful, as a sporting child.
His *heart* refuses to believe, that man
Could turn into a hell the blooming wild

The blissful country, where his childhood ran
A race with infant rivers, ere began
King-humbling, blind misrule his wolfish sway.

IV.

Is it the horn that, on this holy day,
Insults the songs which rise, like incense sweet,
From lowly roofs, where contrite sinners pray,
And pious rustics, poor, yet clean and neat,
To hear th' apostle of the hamlet, meet?
They come, they come! behold, hark!—thundering
 down,
Two headlong coaches urge the dreadful race;
Woe to outsiders, should they be o'erthrown!
Be ready, Doctor, if they break a trace!
Twelve miles an hour—well done; a glorious
 pace!
Poor horses, how they pant, and smoke, and strain!
What then? our jails are full, and England thrives.
Now, Bomb! now, Bomb! Defiance lends again;
Hurrah? Bill Breakneck or the Devil drives!
Whip!—populous England need not care for lives.
O blessed Sabbath! to the coach-horse thou
Bringest no pause from daily toil. For him
There is no day of rest. The laws allow
His ever-batter'd hoof, and anguish'd limb,
Till, death-struck, flash his brain with dizzy swim,

Lo, while his nostrils flame, and, torture-scored,
Quivers his flank beneath the ruthless goad,
Stretch'd, on his neck each vein swells, like a cord !
Hark ! what a groan ! The mute pedestrian, awed.
Stops—while the steed sinks on the reeling road,
Murder'd by hands that know not how to spare !

v.

Now landed Trader, that, with haughty stare,
Throned in thy curtain'd pew, o'erlook'st the squire !
Be kind and saintly ; give, for thou can'st spare,
A pittance to the destitute ; enquire
If yon pale trembler wants not food and fire ?
Though thou could'st thrive, say not all others can,
But look and see how skill and toil are fed ;
Lo, merit is not food to every man !
Pious thou art, and far thy fame is spread ;
But *thy* Saint Peter never preach'd cheap bread.
Though bright the sun, cold blows the winter wind :
Behold the tramper, with his naked toes !
Where for the night shall he a lodging find ?
Or bid that homeless boy relate his woes ;
O try to feel what misery only knows,
And be like him of Wincobank, who ne'er
Sent a fall'n brother heart-struck from his door !
Or be like Wentworth's lord, a blessing here !
O imitate the steward of the poor,
According to thy means, heav'n asks no more !

Think of the hope of ten, the sire of nine,
The proud, skill'd man, wheel-shatter'd yesterday :
His wife will wring her hands ere eve decline ;
And, ah ! the next week's wages, where are they ?
O soothe her, help her, name not parish pay !
Think, too, of her, the maid who dwelt alone,
Whose first, sole, hopeless love was Enoch Wray.
Forgotten ere she died, she lived unknown,
And told her love but once, passing away
Like a slow shadow, in her tresses grey.
Proud, though despised, she sternly paid for rent
Her all, her weekly eighteenpence, and died,
Rather than quit the home where she had spent
Twice forty years. Her last pawn'd rug supplied
A fortnight's food. None heard her if she sigh'd ;
None saw her if she wept ; or saw too late,
That tears were ice upon her lifeless face.
Her Bible on her lap, before the grate
That long had known no fire, gnawing a lace
With toothless gums—the last of all her race—
She died of cold and hunger in her chair.

VI.

The bell strikes twelve. The ancient house of prayer
Pours forth its congregated youth and age ;
The rich, the poor, the gay, the sad, are there ;
And some go thence, who, in their hearts, presage

That one week more will end their pilgrimage.
First, in all haste, comes busy Bolus, croose
As bantam cock, and neat as horse fresh poll'd.
Then boys, all glad, as bottled wasps let loose,
Clapping their hands because their toes are cold.
Then the new Squire (more dreaded than the old)
Raised from the milk-cart by his uncle's will—
A Norfolk farmer he, who loved his joke,
At tax-worn tradesmen aim'd, with practised skill ;
For, scorning trade, he throve, while traders broke,
And did not care a straw for Mister Coke.
Next, lo ! the monarch of the village school,
Slow Jedediah comes, not yet the last.
Well can he bear the blame for stubborn fool ;
Meekly he bows to yeoman, stumping past,
While Bolus, yet in sight, seems travelling fast.
Thou, Jedediah, learnèd wight, know'st well
Why rush the younglings from the porch with glee.
Dear to thy heart is Nature's breezy fell ;
Deeply the captives' woes are felt by thee,
For thou art Nature's, Freedom's devotee !
Witness the moss that winter's rage defies,
Cull'd yesterday, beside the lizard's home ;
Witness thou lichen of the precipice,
Beautiful neighbour of the torrent's foam,
Pluck'd, where the desert often sees him roam !—
Next comes the train who better days have known.
Condemn'd the taunts of paupers born to brook.

With prostrate hearts, that mourn their hopes o'er-
thrown,
And downcast eyes, that shun th' upbraiding look.
Then comes his worship ; then his worship's cook ;
And then, erect as truth, comes Enoch Wray,
Bareheaded still, his cheek still wet with tears,
Pondering the solemn text, as best he may.
Lo, close behind, the curate meek appears !
Kindly he greets the man of five-score years,
The blind, the poor ! while purse-pride turns away,
And whispering asks, half-wishful, half-afraid,
If Enoch has applied for parish pay ?
Short-sighted curate ! ply the worldling's trade,
Or, unprefer'd, grow pale with hope delay'd,
And die, the victim of low craft and spite.
Short-sighted curate ! do as worldlings do ;
Flatter the wolf, for he can snarl and bite.
What, though thy life is pure, thy doctrine true ?
The Squireling hates thee ; Bolus hates thee too.
Physician, surgeon, umpire of thy flock !
Dar'st thou be wise beyond the learnèd schools ?
How laughs the Doctor at thy little stock
Of drugs and simples ! Burn thy useful tools,
Priest and Mechanic, scorn'd by knaves and fools !
Then fawn on wealth and spurn the all-shunn'd
poor.
To grandeur's halls, a punctual dun, repair ;
Or still shall honest rags besiege thy door,

And thou be found at Want's bedside in pray'r,
While Pain moans low, and Death is watching there,
And Hope sees better worlds beyond the sky.

VII.

Near yonder archer yews—that solemnly
Keep aye upraised their desolate hands, in praise
Of the old heav'ns, and hoar antiquity—
Behold the Hall ! There once dwelt Matthew Hayes,
A trading yeoman of the bygone days.
There, where his fathers sojourn'd on the plain,
And damn'd the French, yet loved all humankind,
His annual feast was spread, nor spread in vain ;
There his own acres billow'd in the wind
Their golden corn. A man of vulgar mind,
He laugh'd at learning, while he scrawl'd his cross,
And rear'd his boy in sloth. But times grew worse :
War came—and public waste brought private loss ;
And punctual bankruptcy, the thriving curse,
Beggar'd his debtors, till an empty purse
Answer'd all claims. He sold his land—then died,
Following his broken-hearted wife—and left
Their son, the heir of prejudice and pride,
To drink, and swear, of self-respect bereft,
And feed the day's debauch by nightly theft.
Behold his home, that sternly could withstand
The storms of more than twice a hundred years !
In such a home was Shakspeare's " Hamlet " plann'd,

And Raleigh's boyhood shed ambitious tears
O'er Colon's wrongs. How proudly it uprears
Its tower of cluster'd chimneys, tufted o'er
With ivy, ever green amid the grey,
Yet envy-stung, and muttering evermore
To yon red villa, on the king's highway,
"Thou dandy ! I am *not* of yesterday."
Time seems to reverence these fantastic walls :
Behold the gables quaint, the cornice strong,
The chambers, bellying over latticed halls,
The oaken tracery, outlasting long
The carven stone ; nor do their old age wrong
With laughter vile, or heartless jest profane !

VIII.

Why, Enoch, dost thou start, as if in pain ?
The sound thou hear'st the blind alone could hear :
Alas ! Miles Gordon ne'er will walk again ;
But his poor grandson's footstep wakes thy tear,
As if indeed thy long lost friend were near.
Here oft, with fading cheek and thoughtful brow,
Wanders the youth—town-bred, but desert-born.
Too early taught life's deepening woes to know,
He wakes in sorrow with the weeping morn,
And gives much labour for a little corn.
In smoke and dust, from hopeless day to day,
He sweats, to bloat the harpies of the soil,
Who jail no victim, while his pangs can pay.

Untaxing rent, and trebly taxing toil,
They make the labour of his hands their spoil,
And grind him fiercely ; but he still can get
A crust of *wheaten* bread, despite their frowns ;
They have not sent him like a pauper yet
For Workhouse wages, as they send their clowns ;
Such tactics do not answer yet in towns.
Nor have they gorged his soul. Thrall though he be,
Of brutes who bite him while he feeds them, still
He feels his intellectual dignity,
Works hard, reads usefully, with no mean skill
Writes, and can reason well of good and ill.
He hoards his weekly groat. His tear is shed
For sorrows which his hard-worn hand relieves.
Too poor, too proud, too just, too wise to wed,
(For slaves enough already toil for thieves,)
How gratefully his growing mind receives
The food which tyrants struggle to withhold !
Though hourly ills his every sense invade
Beneath the cloud that o'er his home is roll'd,
He yet respects the power which *man* hath made,
Nor loathes the despot-humbling sons of trade.
But, when the silent Sabbath-day arrives,
He seeks the cottage, bordering on the moor,
Where his forefathers pass'd their lowly lives—
Where still his mother dwells, content though
poor,
And ever glad to meet him at the door.

Oh, with what rapture he prepares to fly
From streets and courts, with crime and sorrow strew'd,
And bids the mountain lift him to the sky !
How proud, to feel his heart not all subdued !
How happy to shake hands with Solitude !
Still, Nature, still he loves thy uplands brown—
That rock, that o'er his father's freehold towers !
And strangers, hurrying through the dingy town,
May know his workshop by its sweet wild flowers.
Cropp'd on the Sabbath from the hedge-side bowers,
The hawthorn blossom in his window droops ;
Far from the headlong stream and lucid air
The pallid alpine rose to meet him stoops,
As if to soothe a brother in despair,
Exiled from Nature and her pictures fair.
E'en winter sends a posy to his jail,
Wreath'd of the sunny celandine—the brief,
Courageous windflower, loveliest of the frail—
The hazel's crimson star—the woodbine's leaf—
The daisy with its half-closed eye of grief—
Prophets of fragrance, beauty, joy, and song !

IX.

Bird ! who would swelter with the laden throng,
That had thy wings ? Earth spurners, you are free !
But thou must drag the chains of life along,
And, all but hopeless, till thou cease to be,
Toil, woe-worn Artisan ! Yet, unlike thee

Is minion'd Erin's sty'd and root-fed clown.
How unlike thee, though once erect and proud,
Is England's peasant slave, the trodden down,
The parish-paid, in soul and body bow'd !
How unlike thee is Jem, the rogue avow'd,
Whose trade is poaching ! Honest Jem works not,
Beggars not, but thieves by plundering beggars here.
Wise as a lord, and quite as good a shot,
He, like his betters, lives in hate and fear,
And feeds on partridge, because bread is dear.
Sire of six sons, apprenticed to the jail,
He prowls in arms, the tory of the night ;
With them he shares his battles and his ale ;
With him they feel the majesty of might ;
No despot better knows that Power is Right.
Mark his unpaidish sneer, his lordly frown ;
Hark, how he calls beadle and flunky liars !
See how magnificently he breaks down
His neighbour's fence, if so his will requires !
And how his struttle emulates the Squire's !
And how like Mistress Gig, late Betty Scrubb,
Or Mister Dunghill, with his British pride,
He takes the wall of Glossin and his cub,
Or loyal Guts, who, bursting, coughs, to hide
The wounded meanness he mistakes for pride !
Jem rises with the moon ; but when she sinks,
Homeward, with sack-like pockets, and quick heels,
Hungry as boroughmongering ghoul, he slinks.

He reads not, writes not, thinks not—scarcely feels ;
Insolent ape ! whate'er he gets he steals,
Then plays the devil with his righteous gain !

X.

O thou, whom conquer'd seas made great in vain,
Fall'n Venice ! Ocean Queen no more ! oppress'd
Nurse of true slaves, and lords whom slaves disdain !
Whisper thy sickening sister of the West
That Trade hath wings, to fly from climes unblest !
Trade, the transformer, that turns dross to bread,
And reaps rich harvests on the barren main ;
Trade, that uproots wild flowers, and from their bed
Digs forth hard steel, to hew the bondman's chain :
Tamer of Tyrants, else opposed in vain !
And ye—once guardians of the fainting state,
Shades of the Rockinghams and Savilles ! ye
Who lived when paupers did not dine on plate !
Wake !—can ye sleep ? Indignant, wake ! and see
Alms-taking wealth, alms-giving poverty !
Thou, too, undemonizer of the proud !
Religion, that canst raise and dignify
The heart which abject penury hath bow'd !
From gorgeous climes beneath the eastern sky,
Call home the lightning of thy seraph eye ;
Gird thy almighty loins ; thy work *begin* !
Plead for the pariah of the isles of woes,
And speak, with Luther's voice, to giant Sin !

So may the year of tortured ages close
Ere the slow Angel start from his repose,
Like Stanedge, shaking thunder from his mane !

XI.

But who will listen when the poor complain ?
Who read, or hear, a tale of woe, if true ?
Ill fares the friendless Muse of want and pain.
Fool ! would'st thou prosper, and be honest, too ?
Fool ! would'st thou prosper ? Flatter those who do !
If, not unmindful of the all-shunn'd poor,
Thou write on tablets frail their troubles deep,
The proud, the vain, will scorn thy theme obscure.
What wilt thou earn, though lowly hearts may steep
With tears the page in which their sorrows weep ?
Growl, if thou wilt, in vulgar sympathy
With plunder'd labour ; pour thy honest bile
In satire, hiss'd at base prosperity ;
And let his enviers, from their pittance vile,
Reward the pauper virtues of thy style.
But, hark ! what accents of what slave enquire
Why rude mechanics dare to wield the quill ?
He bids me from the scribbler's desk retire,
Rehoof my fingers, and forget my skill
In railing foully, and in writing ill.
O that my poesy were like the child
That gathers daisies from the lap of May,
With prattle sweeter than the bloomy wild !

It then might teach poor Wisdom to be gay
As flowers, and birds, and rivers, all at play,
And winds, that make the voiceless clouds of morn
Harmonious. But distemper'd, if not mad,
I feed on Nature's bane, and mess with scorn.
I would not, could not if I would, be glad,
But, like shade-loving plants, am happiest sad.
My heart, once soft as woman's tear, is gnarl'd
With gloating on the ills I cannot cure.
Like Arno's exiled bard, whose music snarl'd,
I gird my loins to suffer and endure,
And woo Contention, for her dower is sure.
Tear not thy gauze, thou garden-seeking fly,
On thorny flowers, that love the dangerous storm,
And flourish most beneath the coldest sky !
But ye who honour truth's enduring form,
Come ! there are heath flowers, and the fangèd worm,
Clouds, gorse, and whirlwind, on the gorgeous moor.



BOOK IV.

CONTENTS.

Recitation of Manfred to Enoch Wray—Byron and his Contemporaries—First Perusal of "Schiller's Robbers:" followed by the Blindness of the Patriarch—Further Particulars of his History and Character.

I.

Enoch, the lights are darken'd on the hill,
But in the house a thoughtful watch is set ;
Warm on the ancient hearth fire glimmers still ;
Nor do the travellers their way forget ;
Nor is the grasshopper a burthen yet.
Though blossoms on the mountain top the snow,
The maids of music yet are lingering near ;
Still are the wakeful listeners wise to know ;
Still to thy soul the voice of song is dear.
And when I read to thee that vision drear—
The Manfred of stern Byron—thou didst bend,
Fix'd, to drink in each touching word and tone.
On thy changed cheek I saw strong feeling blend
Impetuous hues ; and tears fell, one by one,
From thy closed eyes, as on the moorland stone
The infant river drops its crystal chill.

II.

Say, then, is Pope our prince of poets still ?
Or may we boast, in these all rhyming days,
One climber of the Heliconian hill,
Whose classic spirit and unborrow'd lays
Johnson or caustic Swift had deign'd to praise ?
Scott, whose invention is a magic loom ;
Baillie, artificer of deathless dreams ;
Moore, the Montgomery of the drawing-room ;
Montgomery, the Moore of solemn themes ;
Crabbe, whose dark gold is richer than it seems ;
Keats, that sad name, which time shall write in tears ;
Poor Burns, the Scotchman, who was not a slave ;
Campbell, whom Freedom's deathless Hope endears ;
White, still remember'd in his cruel grave ;
Ill-fated Shelley, vainly great and brave ;
Wordsworth, whose thoughts acquaint us with our
 own ;
Didactic, earnest Cowper, grave and gay ;
Wild Southey, flying, like the henn, alone ;
And dreamy Coleridge, of the wizard lay :
These are true bards, who please not Enoch Wray !
But may not Byron, dark and grand, compete
With him who sung Belinda's ravish'd tress ?
Chaste is the muse of Pope, and passing sweet ;
But Byron is all fervour, rivalless
In might and passion. Woman's tenderness—

When woman is most tender, most deplored—
Moves not like his ; and still, when least divine,
He is a god, whose shrines shall be restored—
Apollo, self-dethroned. His mind a mine
Where night-born gems in cherish'd darkness shine,
He—thrice a Ford, twice an Euripides,
And half a Schiller—hath a Milton's power,
But not a Shakspeare's ; strength, and fire, and ease,
And almost grace ; though gloomy as the tower
Around whose dangerous brow storms love to lower,
His world is all within, like Enoch Wray's.

III.

The full-blown flower, maturely fair, displays
Intensest beauty, and the enamour'd wind
Drinks its deep fragrance. But could lengthen'd
days
Have ripen'd to more worth dark Byron's mind,
And purged his thoughts from taint of earth refined ?
Or would he have sent forth a fiercer glow,
And gloomier splendour, from his core of fire ?
We know not what he might have been, but **know**
What he could *not* be. Proud of his high lyre,
We mourn the dead, who never can expire.
Proud of his fearless frown, his burning tear ;
Proud of the poet of all hearts, who heard
The mute reproach of Greece ; with zeal severe,

We scrutinize our least injurious word,
Nor longer deem his spleeny whims absurd,
His pangs ridiculous, his weakness crime.

IV.

Heaven's fav'rites are short lived. Stern fate and time
Will have their victims ; and the best die first,
Leaving the bad still strong, though past their prime,
To curse the hopeless world they ever cursed,
Vaunting vile deeds, and vainest of the worst.
And he who cannot perish is no more !
He died who is immortal, and must be,
To time's slow years, like ocean to the shore,
The sun to heav'n ! He died where fell the free
Of ancient Greece ; and Greeks his loss deplore.
There, where they fight, as fought their sires of yore,
In the great cause of all the good and great,
Liberty's martyr, England's, Europe's pride,
Girding his broken heart, he champion'd fate,
And laid down life—though not as Russell died,
To him, “by better ties than blood,” allied.
Beyond the deep he perish'd, far from all
That darken'd death with love ; and, though the wave
Leagued with his foes to mock his dying call,
His dust is where his heart was, when he gave
Years of defeated glory for a grave,
Sighing in death his deathless love and woe.

v.

Father ! thy life has been prolong'd, to know
Strange times, strange men, strange changes, and
 strange lays ;

The warrior-bard whom Athens, long ago,
Crown'd peerless heir of never-dying praise,
Hath found a greater. In those fearful days
When, tempest-driv'n, and toss'd on troubled seas,
Thought, like the petrel, loved the whirlwind best,
And o'er the waves, and through the foam, with ease,
Rose up into the black cloud's thund'rous breast,
To rouse the lightning from his gloomy rest ;
Then, in the shadow of the mountains, dwelt
A lady, to whose heart high hopes were dear,
Who wildly thought, and passionately felt,
And strangely dream'd, that man—the slave of Fear,
And Pain, and Want—might be an angel here.
Full oft that lady of the glen remote
Called Enoch her wise mason ; oft partook
His humble meal, while, mirror'd in his thought,
The pensive past assumed her own sweet look.
'Twas then she gave him her last gift, a book
Dark with strange power, and fearfully divine.
It chill'd his blood, it lifted up his hair ;
Spirits of terror lived in every line ;
A spell was on its pages of despair,
And burning woes, which Nature could not bear.

'Twas grand, but dreadful as the thoughts that
 wring

The son of morning, from the solar beam
Hurl'd to the centre, where his soul, unstrung,
Disdained submission still, too proud to seem
Unvanquish'd. Was it but a fearful dream,
That tale of Schiller's? *Did* the robber Moor
Pierce through Amelia's broken heart his own?
Smite the dark tower and shake the iron door?
And *was* he answered by a father's groan?—
Th' Avonian seer hath ceased to stand alone.
But thou no more shalt printed vision read.
Enoch! that dire perusal was thy last:
For, from thine eyeballs, with a spirit's speed,
Gone, and for ever, light and beauty pass'd.
Not that a horror and a woe too vast
Had quench'd thy brilliant orbs: nor was thy
 doom

Like his—the bard who sang of Eden's bowers,
The bard of lofty thought, all fire and gloom,
All might and purity—whose awful powers,
Too darkly strong for organs frail as ours,
Press'd on his visual nerve a pall-like night:
But God, who chastens whom he loves, ordain'd,
Although thy frame was vigorous, thy step light,
Thy spirit like th' autumnal gale unrein'd—
That thine should be affliction, well sustain'd,
To show the proud what humble worth can bear.

VI.

Then hither, Pride, with tearless eyes repair !
Come, and learn wisdom from un murmuring woe,
That, 'reft of early hope, yet scorns despair.
Still in his bosom light and beauty glow,
Though darkness took him captive long ago.
Nor is the man of five-score years alone :
A heav'nly form, in pity, hovers near ;
He listens to a voice of tenderest tone,
Whose accents sweet the happy cannot hear ;
And, lo, he dashes from his cheek a tear,
Caught by an angel shape, with tresses pale.
He sees her, in his soul. How fix'd he stands !
But, oh, can angels weep ? Can grief prevail
O'er spirits pure ? She waves her thin, white hands :
And while her form recedes, her eye expands,
Gazing on joys which he who seeks shall find.
There is an eye that watches o'er the blind :
He *hath* a friend—"not lost, but gone before"—
Who left her image in his heart behind.
But when his hands, in darkness, trembled o'er
Her lifeless features, and he heard no more
The voice whose last tone bless'd him, frenzy came !
Blindness on blindness ! midnight thick and deep.
Too heavy to be felt !—then pangs, like flame,
That sear'd the brain—sorrow that could not weep :
Fever, that would have barter'd worlds for sleep !

He had no tears, but those that inly pour,
And scald the heart ; no slumbers, but the doze
That stuns the mourner who can hope no more ;
But he had shudderings, stupor, nameless woes,
Horror, which only he that suffers knows.
But frenzy did not kill. His iron frame,
Though shaken, stood. The mind's night faded
slow.

Then would he call upon his daughter's name,
Because it was her mother's ! And his woe
Waned into resignation, pleased to show
A face of peace, without the smile it wore.
Nor did the widower learn again to smile
Until his daughter to her Albert bore
Another Mary, (^b) and on yonder stile
He nursed the babe, that sweetly could beguile,
With looks unseen, "all sadness but despair."

VII.

Nay, Enoch, do not weep. The day is fair,
And flings bright lightnings from his helm abroad ;
Let us drink deep the pure and lucid air,
Ere darkness call thee to her damp abode.
Hark, how the titling whistles o'er the road !
Holm, plume thy palms ! and toss thy purple Torse
Elm ! but, Wood Rose, be not a bride too soon !
Snows yet may shroud alive the golden gorse :

Thou early-green ! deem not thy bane a boon ;
Distrust the day that changeth like the moon.
But still our father weeps. Ah ! though all hues
Are dead to him, the floral hours shall yet
Shed o'er his heart their fragrance-loving dew !
E'en now, the daisy, like a gem, is set,
Though faint and rare, in winter's coronet.
Thy sisters sleep, adventurous windflower pale !
And thy meek blush affronts the celandine,
The starry herald of that gentlest gale
Whose plumes are sunbeams, dipp'd in odours fine :
Well may'st thou blush ; but sad blight will be thine.
If glowing day shut frore in stormy night.

VIII.

Still dost thou weep, old man ? The day is bright.
And spring is near : come, take a youngster's arm :
Come, let us wander where the flocks delight
At noon to sun them, when the sun is warm ;
And visit them, beyond thy uncle's farm,
The one-arch'd bridge—thy glory, and thy pride,
Thy Parthenon, the triumph of thy skill ;
Which still bestrides, and long it shall bestride,
The discontented stream, from hill to hill,
Laughing to scorn the moorland torrent still.
How many years hath he slept in the tomb
Who swore thy bridge would yield to one year's rain !
E'en London folks, to see and praise it, come ;

And envious masons pray, with shame and pain.
For skill like Enoch Wray's, but pray in vain.
For he could do what others could not learn,
First having learn'd what Heav'n alone can teach :
The parish idiot might his skill discern ;
And younglings, with the shell upon their breech.
Left top and taw, to listen to his speech.
The barber, proudest of mankind confest
His equal worth—"or so the story ran"—
Whate'er he did, all own'd, he did it best ;
And e'en the bricklayer, his sworn foe, began
To say, that Enoch *was* no common man.
Had he carved beauty in the cold white stone,
(Like Law, the unknown Phidias of our day,)
The village Angelo had quail'd to none
Whom critics eulogize, or princes pay ;
And ne'er had Chantrey equall'd Enoch Wray.
Forgotten relic of a world that was !
But thou art not forgotten, though, alas !
'Thou art become a stranger, sunny nook,
On which the changeful seasons, as they pass,
Wait ever kindly ! He no more will look
On thee, warm bank ! will see thy hermit brook
No more, no more. But kindled at the blaze
Of day, thy fragrance makes thy presence known.
Behold ! he counts his footsteps as he strays !
He *feels* that he is near thy verdure lone ;
And his heart whispers, that thy flowers are blown,

Pale primrose, know'st thou Enoch ? Long ago
 Thy fathers knew him ; and their child is dear,
 Because he loved them. See, he bends him low,
 With reverend grace, to thee—and drops a tear.
 “ I see thee not,” he sighs, “ but thou art here ;
 Speak to a poor, blind man ! And thou *canst* speak
 To the lone blind. Still, still thy tones can reach
 His listening heart, and soothe, or bid it break.
 Oh, memory hears again the thrilling speech
 Of thy meek beauty ! Fain his hand would reach
 And pluck thee—No ! that would be sacrilege.

BOOK V.

CONTENTS.

An Excursion with Enoch Wray to the Mountains—Beautiful Winter Morning—Rivers of Hallamshire—Short Lived Grinder, contrasted with the Patriarch—The Moors—Mountain Bee—Enfeebled Snake—Lost Lad—The Desert, a fit Abode for Spirits—Christ's Love of Solitude—Reflections, suggested by the Desolation of the Scene.

I.

Come, Father of the Hamlet ! grasp again
 Thy stern ash plant, cut when the woods were young :
 Come, let us leave the plough-subjected plain,
 And rise, with freshen'd hearts, and nerves restrung.
 Into the azure dome, that, haply, hung
 O'er thoughtful power, ere suffering had begun.

II.

Flowers peep, trees bud, boughs tremble, rivers
run ;

The redwing saith, it is a glorious morn.

Blue are thy Heavens, thou Highest ! and thy sun
Shines without cloud, all fire. How sweetly, borne

On wings of morning o'er the leafless thorn,

The tiny wren's small twitter warbles near !

How swiftly flashes in the stream the trout !

Woodbine ! our father's ever-watchful ear

Knows, by thy rustle, that thy leaves are out.

The trailing bramble hath not yet a sprout ;

Yet harshly to the wind the wanton prates,

Not with thy smooth lisp, woodbine of the fields !

Thou future treasure of the bee, that waits

Gladly on thee, spring's harbinger ! when yields

All bounteous earth her odorous flowers, and builds

The nightingale, in beauty's fairest land.

III.

Five rivers, like the fingers of a hand,

Flung from black mountains, mingle, and are one

Where sweetest valleys quit the wild and grand,

And eldest forests, o'er the silvan Don,

Bid their immortal brother journey on,

A stately pilgrim, watch'd by all the hills.
Say, shall we wander where, through warrior's graves,
The infant Yewden, mountain-cradled, trills
Her doric notes? Or, where the Locksley raves
Of broil and battle, and the rocks and caves
Dream yet of ancient days? Or, where the sky
Darkens o'er Rivilin, the clear and cold,
That throws his blue length, like a snake, from high?
Or, where deep azure brightens into gold
O'er Sheaf, that mourns in Eden? Or, where roll'd
On tawny sands, through regions passion-wild,
And groves of love, in jealous beauty dark,
Complains the Porter, Nature's thwarted child,
Born in the waste, like headlong Wiming? Hark!
The poised hawk calls thee, Village Patriarch!
He calls thee to his mountains! Up, away!
Up, up, to Stanedge! higher still ascend,
Till kindred rivers, from the summit grey,
To distant seas their course in beauty bend,
And, like the lives of human millions, blend
Disparted waves in one immensity!

IV.

Beautiful rivers of the desert! ye
Bring food for labour from the foodless waste.
Pleased stops the wanderer on his way, to see
The frequent weir oppose your heedless haste.
Where toils the Mill, by ancient woods embraced,

Hark, how the cold steel screams in hissing fire ?
But Enoch sees the Grinder's wheel no more,
Couch'd beneath rocks and forests, that admire
Their beauty in the waters, ere they roar
Dash'd in white foam the swift circumference o'er.
There draws the Grinder his laborious breath ;
There, coughing, at his deadly trade he bends.
Born to die young, he fears nor man nor death ;
Scorning the future, what he earns he spends ;
Debauch and Riot are his bosom friends.
He plays the Tory, sultan-like and well :
Woe to the traitor that dares disobey
The Dey of Straps ! as rattan'd tools shall tell.
Full many a lordly freak, by night, by day,
Illustrates gloriously his lawless sway.
Behold his failings ! hath he virtues, too ?
He is no pauper, blackguard though he be.
Full well he knows what minds combined can do,
Full well maintains his birthright—He is free !
And, frown for frown, outstares monopoly !
Yet Abraham and Elliot, both in vain,*
Bid science on his cheek prolong the bloom ;
He *will* not live ! he seems in haste to gain
The undisturb'd asylum of the tomb,
And, old at two-and-thirty, meets his doom !
Man of a hundred years, how unlike thee !

* Mr. Abraham improved, it is said, and Mr. John Elliot invented, the grinder's preservative, which the grinders will not use !

V.

But steeper hills look down on stream and tree ;
I pray thee, pause, or, lo, I lag behind !
Ah, thou wilt prove an overmatch for me,
Despite the sad erectness of the blind.
Whoever walks with thee, though young, will find
'Tis hard for youth to emulate thy age.
They were adventurous Sampsons, that would try
To lift a load with Enoch, or engage
To fling a heavier quoit. And thigh to thigh,
And foot to foot, placed well and warily,
He who throws thee had need be in his prime.

VI.

The moors—all hail ! Ye changeless, ye sublime,
That seldom hear a voice, save that of Heav'n !
Scorners of chance, and fate, and death, and time,
But not of Him, whose viewless hand hath riv'n
The chasm, through which the mountain stream is
driv'n !

How like a prostrate giant—not in sleep,
But listening to his beating heart—ye lie !
With winds and clouds dread harmony ye keep ;
Ye seem alone beneath the boundless sky ;
Ye speak, are mute—and there is no reply !

Here all is sapphire light, and gloomy land,
Blue, brilliant sky, above a sable sea
Of hills, like chaos, ere the first command,
“ Let there be light ! ” bade light and beauty be.
But thou art here, thou rarest cloudberry !
O health-restorer ! did he know thy worth,
The bilious townsman would for thee resign
His wall-grown peach, well pleased. In moorland
earth
Thee would he plant, thou more than nectarine !
Thou better grape ! and, in thy fruit divine,
Quaff strength and beauty from the living bough.

VII.

This scene is ancient, Enoch must allow.
Marble is less enduring than the flower
That wither'd ages hence, and withers now,
Where, black as night, th' unalter'd mountain's tower,
And baffled Time sees things that mock his power.
I thank ye, billows of a granite sea,
That the bribed plough, defeated, halts below !
And thanks, majestic Barrenness, to thee,
For one grim region in a land of woe,
Where tax-sown wheat and paupers will not grow.
Here pause, old Man, the alpine air to taste :
Drink it from Nature's goblet, while the morn
Speaks like a fiery trumpet to the waste.

Here despot grandeur reigns in pomp forlorn.
Despair might sojourn here, with bosom torn,
And long endure, but never smile again.
Hail to the tempest's throne, the cloud's high road,
Lone as the agèd sky, and hoary main !
'The path we tread the Sherwood outlaws trode,
Where no man bideth, Locksley's band abode,
And urged the salient roe through bog and brake.

VIII.

Know'st thou our father, thou enfeebled snake,
'That seek'st the sun too soon ? Dost thou, in awe
And love, the seldom trodden path forsake ?
'To him, thou seem'st the very snake he saw
In ruddy boyhood. While thy folds withdraw,
Uncoil'd o'er cranshy roots, and fern-stalks dry,
He thinks he sees thee, colour'd like the stone,
With cruel and atrocious Tory eye,
And anxious look of dog that seeketh bone,
Or sour Scotch placeman, when his place is gone,
'To feed some Whiggish fool, who will not eat.

IX.

Bee ! that hast left thy sandy-coved retreat (°)
Before the living purple hath purvey'd
Food for thee ; potent pigmy ! that the fleet
Wing'd moments of the past, and years, array'd
In patch-work, from the robe of things decay'd,

Recall'st from sad oblivion ! thou canst do
What mightest spirits cannot—Silence hears
Thy murmur ; and our sire, who hears it too,
Lives o'er again a hundred pensive years.
Pathetic insect ! thou hast brought fresh tears
To sightless eye-balls, and a channel'd cheek.
O that once more he could become a boy,
And see the morning o'er the mountains break
In clouds of fire, which, army-like, *deploy*—
That he might chase thee, with a hunter's joy,
Vainly, o'er moss, and heath, and plumy fern !

X.

Father ! we stand upon the mountain stern,
That cannot feel our lightness, and disdains
Reptiles, that sting and perish in their turn,
That hiss and die—and lo ! no trace remains
Of all their joys, their triumphs, and their pains !
Yet to stand here might well exalt the mind :
These are not common moments, nor is this
A common scene. Hark, how the coming wind
Booms, like the funeral dirge of woe, and bliss,
And life, and form, and mind, and all that is !
How like the wafture of a world-wide wing
It sounds and sinks—and all is hush'd again !
But are our spirits humbled ? No ! We string
The lyre of death with mystery and pain,
And proudly hear the dreadful notes complain

That man is not the whirlwind, but the leaf,
Torn from the tree to soar and disappear.
Grand is our weakness, and sublime our grief.
Lo ! on this rock, I shake off hope and fear,
And stand released from clay ! yet am I here,
And at my side are blindness, age, and woe.

XI.

Far to the left where streams disparted flow,
Rude as his home of granite, dark and cold,
In ancient days, beneath the mountain's brow,
Dwelt, with his son, a widower poor and old.
Two steeds he had, whose manes and forelocks bold
Comb ne'er had touch'd ; and daily to the town
They dragg'd the rock, from moorland quarries torn.
Years roll'd away. The son, to manhood grown,
Married his equal ; and a boy was born,
Dear to the grandsire's heart. But pride, and scorn,
And avarice, fang'd the mother's small grey eyes,
That dully shone, like studs of tarnish'd lead.
She poison'd soon her husband's mind with lies ;
Soon nought remain'd to cheer the old man's shed,
Save the sweet boy, that nightly shared his bed.
And worse days were at hand. The son defied
The father—seized his goods, his steeds, his cart :
The old man saw, and, unresisting, sigh'd :
But when the child, unwilling to depart,
Clung to his knees, then spoke the old man's heart

In gushing tears. “The floor,” he said, “is dry :
Let the poor boy sleep with me this one night.”
“Nay,” said the mother ; and she twitch’d awry
Her rabid lip ; and dreadful was the sight,
When the dwarf’d vixen dash’d, with fiendish spite,
Her tiny fist into the old man’s face ;
While he, soft-hearted giant, sobb’d and wept.
But the child triumph’d ! Rooted to the place,
Clasping the agèd knees, his hold he kept,
And once more in his grandsire’s bosom slept.
And nightly still, and every night the boy
Slept with his grandsire, on the rush-strewn floor,
Till the old man forgot his wrongs, and joy
Revisited the cottage of the moor.
But a sad night was darkening round his door :
The snow had melted silently away,
And, at the gloaming, ceased the all-day rain ;
But the child came not. Wherefore did he stay ?
The old man rose, nor long look’d forth in vain ;
The stream was bellowing from the hills amain,
And screams were mingled with its sullen roar :
“The boy is in the burn,” said he, dismay’d,
And rush’d forth, wild with anguish. From the
shore
He plunged ; then, staggering, with both hands
display’d,
Caught, screaming, at the boy, who shriek’d for
aid,

And sank and raised his hands, and rose, and
scream'd !

He leap'd ; he struck o'er eddying foam ; he cast
His wilder'd glance o'er waves that yelp'd and gleam'd ;
And wrestled with the stream, that grasp'd him fast,
Like a bird struggling with a serpent vast.

Still, as he miss'd his aim, more faintly tried
The boy to scream ; still down the torrent went
The lessening cries ; and soon, far off, they died ;
While o'er the waves, that still their boom forth sent,
Descended, coffin-black, the firmament.

Morn came : the boy return'd not : noon was nigh ;
And then the mother sought the hut in haste.
There sat the wretched man, with glaring eye ;
And in his arms the lifeless child, embraced,
Lay like a darkening snow-wreath on the waste.
“ God curse thee, dog ! what hast thou done ? ” she
cried,

And fiercely on his horrid eye-balls gazed :
Nor hand, nor voice, nor dreadful eyes replied ;
Still on the corpse he stared with head unraised ;
But in his fix'd eyes light unnatural blazed,
For *Mind* had left them, to return no more.
Man of the wither'd heart-strings ! is it well ?
Long in the grave hath slept the maniac hoar ;
But of the “ lost lad ” still the mountains tell,
When shriek the spirits of the hooded fell,
And, many-voiced, comes down the foaming snow.

XII.

Hail ! silence of the desert !—I speak low
In reverence—here the falcon's wing is awed,
As o'er the deep repose, sublimely slow,
He wheels in conscious majesty abroad.
Spirits should make the desert their abode.
The meekest, purest, mightiest, that e'er wore
Dust as a garment, stole from crowds unblest'd
To sea-like forests, or the sea-beat shore,
And utter'd, on the star-sought mountain's breast,
The holiest precepts e'er to dust address'd.
Oh, happy souls of death-freed men, if here
Ye wander, in your noiseless forms, unseen !
Though not remote, removed from grief and fear,
And all that pride shall be, and guilt hath been ;
While gentle death his shadow casts between
Thoughts seraph-wing'd, and man's infirmity !

XIII.

To live unseen, but not to cease to be !
Unheard, unseen, with men, or rocks, to dwell !
O that I were all thought and memory,
A wing'd intelligence invisible !
Then would I read the virgin's fears, and tell
Delicious secrets to her lover's heart,
By spectre-haunted wood, or wizard stream ;
Or bid the awful form of Justice start,

And prompt the conscience-stricken murderer's
scream ;

Or scourge the rich man, in his ghastly dream,
For heartless deeds, unwept, and unatoned.

XIV.

Hail, Desolation ! Solitude ! and, throned
On changeless rocks, Eternity ! Look down,
And say, What see ye ?—Want, that vainly groan'd.
While Mercy gave him stones for food ! The frown
Of guilt, on minds and hearts, in ruins strown !
Hate, torturing Constancy, that loved too well !
Majestic things, in gnats that live an hour !
Soul-bartering Faction, fain to buy or sell,
And 'spoused to Fraud, with kingdoms for a dower !
Ye sister forms of Nature's dread and power !
Stand ye upon the earth ? Heav'n hath no cloud
To be a carpet for your dismal feet.

Ye stand upon the earth, and skies are bow'd
To knee your throne, this granite-pillar'd seat,
That is, and was, and shall be. Wildly beat,
Beneath your footstool, passions, feelings, deeds,
Like billows on the solitary shore,
Where baffled wave to baffled wave succeeds,
Spurn'd by the sullen rocks, with sullen roar,
And rising, falling, foaming evermore,
To rise, and fall, and roar, and foam in vain.

XV.

Ye rocks ! ye elements ! thou shoreless main,
In whose blue depths, worlds, ever voyaging,
Freighted with life and death, of fate complain !
Things of immutability ! ye bring
Thoughts that with sorrow and with terror wring
The human breast. Unchanged, of sad decay
And deathless change ye speak, like prophets old,
Foretelling Evil's ever-present day ;
And, as when Horror lays his finger cold
Upon the heart in dreams, appal the bold.
O thou, Futurity, our hope and dread,
Let me unveil thy features, fair or foul !
Thou, who shalt see the grave untenanted.
And commune with the re-embodied soul !
Tell me thy secrets, ere thy ages roll
Their deeds, that yet shall be on earth, in heav'n,
And in deep hell, where rabid hearts with pain
Must purge their plagues, and learn to be forgiven !
Show me the beauty that shall fear no stain,
And still, through age-long years, unchanged remain !
As one who dreads to raise the pallid sheet
Which shrouds the beautiful and tranquil face
That yet can smile, but never more shall meet,
With kisses warm, his ever-fond embrace ;
So, I draw nigh to thee, with timid pace,
And tremble, though I long to lift thy veil.

BOOK VI.

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray versifies his Dream—His Anxiety to recite his Composition to his Neighbour, Alice Green—Snow-storm.

I.

Dreams ! are ye vapours of the heated brain,
Or echoes of our deeds, our fears, our hopes ?
Fever'd remembrances, that o'er again
Tell prose adventures, in poetic tropes,
While drowsy judgment with illusion copes
Feebly and vainly ? Are ye paid when due ?
Or, like our cobweb wealth, unfound when sought ?
Be ye of stirring value, weigh'd and true,
Or the mere paper currency of thought,
By spendthrift fancy sign'd, and good for nought—
Enoch hath dream'd a dream, like saddest truth.
And done it into rhyme. And Alice Green—
The shrewish village quack, and ever sooth
Interpreter of dreams—can tell, I ween,
What signs and omens, rhymed or rhymeless mean.
With all a poet's ardour to rehearse
A vision, like the Florentine's of yore,
Feverish and nervous, muttering deathless verse,
He opens oft, and oft he shuts the door,
And every leaden minute seems a score.

But he is storm-bound. To the marsh below,
While squattering ducks decend, and, with pale beams,
The hooded, ineffectual sun, through snow
That fell all night, and still is falling, gleams,
Like reason, struggling half awake, in dreams,
He hears the redbreast peck the frosted pane,
Asking admittance to the warm fireside ;
And—while o'er muffled ruts each cart and wain
Moves without sound—he opes the casement wide,
To hail once more the guest he ne'er denied ;
Then spreads his hands, to feel if yet the plumes
Of heav'n are wavering in the noiseless air ;
Determined—when the burden'd sky resumes
Its lucid azure, clear, and cold, and fair—
Through paths of hidden peril to repair,
And have some harmless fun with Alice Green.
How wild, how wondrous, and how changed the
scene

Since yesterday ! On hill and valley bright
Then look'd broad heav'n, all splendid and serene ;
And earth and sky were beauty, music, light.
But now the storm-cock shakes the powdery white,
With start impatient, from his shivering wings ;
And, on the maple's loaded bough depress'd,
Perch'd o'er the buried daisy sweetly sings,
With modulated throat and speckled breast,
To cheer the hen bird, drooping in the nest
On dusky eggs, with many a dot and streak.

II.

Love of the celandine and primrose meek !
Star of the leafless hazel ! where art thou ?
Where is the windflower, with its modest cheek ?
Larch ! hast thou dash'd from thy denuded brow
Blossoms, that stole their rose-hues from the glow
Of Even, blushing into dreams of love ?
Flowers of the wintry beam and faithless sky !
Gems of the wither'd bank and shadeless grove !
Ye are where he who mourns you soon must lie ;
Beneath the shroud ye slumber, tranquilly ;
But not for ever. Yet a sudden hour
Shall thaw the spotless mantle of your sleep,
And bid it, melted into thunder, pour
From mountain, waste, and fell, with foamy sweep.
Whelming the flooded plain in ruin deep.
Yes, little silent minstrels of the wild,
Your voiceless song shall touch the heart again !
And shall no morning dawn on Sorrow's child ?
Shall buried *mind* for ever mute remain
Beneath the sod, from which your beauteous strain
Shall yet arise in music, felt, not heard ?
No ! Faith, Hope, Love, Fear, Gladness, Frailty, all,
Forbid that man should perish. Like the bird
That soars and sings in Nature's festival,
Our souls shall rise—and fear no second fall—
Our adoration strike a lyre divine !

III.

Now, through the clearing storm, the sunbeams shine;
And, lo! the fluttering flakes are winnow'd fire!
Thinner and thinner fall the fleeces fine;
From mantled fells the umber'd clouds retire;
And heav'n, that stoop'd to earth, is lifted higher.
How Nature dazzles in her bridal vest!
Like air-blown fire on fire is light on snow.
A long-lost feeling wakes in Enoch's breast;
His sightless eye-balls feel a sapphire glow,
That speaks of hues and forms dead long ago—
The bright, the wild, the beautiful, the grand!



BOOK VII.

CONTENTS.

Enoch Wray's Dream.

I.

Gone! are ye gone? Bright dreams of youth, adieu!
Old, blind, and poor, I dream of dreadful things.
Methought I saw a man, renown'd and true,
Rise from the grave, upborne on sable wings,
Bradshaw his name, abhorr'd by slaves and kings.

His hue was Death's, his majesty his own.
There was a thoughtful calmness in his air :
Decision, like a ready sword undrawn,
Reposed, but slept not, on his forehead bare ;
But Caution, too, and deep research were there.
At first, his lip curl'd fiercely, as he went
O'er fields, o'er towns, o'er souls, in baseness
 bow'd ;

But, meeken'd soon, his awful visage blent
Sad beauty with his sternness, like the cloud
Whose tears are lightnings. "What !" he cried
 aloud,

"Is tyranny immortal? Oh, if here
Freedom yet linger, in what hated shed,
Where proud endurance scorns to drop a tear,
And woe-nursed virtues eat their hard-earn'd bread,
Nerves she the heart and hand that despots dread?
Hide not thy head in clouds, thou Rock, that saw'st
The Pym and Hampdens! these, our sons, can feel
The pang of shame, though, dwarf'd in soul, they
 boast

Nor manly thoughts, nor hearts, nor hands of steel,
Like those that battled for the common weal.
Say, Rock, is that a Briton? that mean thing,
Who dares not lift his eyes above the feet
Of pauper Satraps, or the village king
Whom they depute to torture and to cheat?
Slave—free to toil, that idle wolves may eat!

What is a Briton? One who runs away,
To barter souls for untax'd wine abroad,
And curse his brutes, who sweat at home, and
bray.

Art thou a Briton, Ass, that lov'st the goad,
And bray'st in honour of thy glorious load?—
Say, palaced pauper, drunk with misery's tears,
Did Russell, Fairfax, spring from gods like thee?
Or, scourge for poverty! is this Algiers?
Dog of the bread-tax-eating Absentee!
Our children feed thy lord—why growl at me?
Where are thy paper wings of yesterday,
Thou bankrupt gambler for the landed knave?—
Audacious poacher, scorn'st thou parish pay?
Kill'st thou God's hares to shun a beggar's grave?
What! is it better to be thief than slave?—
Wretch, that did'st kill thy sire, to sell him dead!
Art thou a Briton? Thou hast Strafford's brow.
Poor, corn-bill'd weaver, singing hymns for bread!
Could Hampden breathe where crawl such worms as
thou?

Spirit of Pym! lo, these are Britons now!
Charles Stuart! are they worthy to be thine?
Thou smil'st in scorn, in triumph, and in pride.
And thou, at Marston taught by right divine,
Thou recreant patron of vain regicide!
Laugh'st thou at blasted hopes, whose vauntings
lied?

Beast, featured like the angels ! can'st thou view
This dome, outstretch'd by God's geometry,
And doubt that *Man* may be sublime and true ?
Or, while the boy smiles upward from thy knee,
Believe that slaves of slaves shall not be free ?—
How like meek Laud yon Cadi-Dervise scowls !
A patent parson, made to please the squire !
Priest, Judge, and Jury, for the cure of souls !
Virtues like his no still small voice require ;
He cries his wares, and is himself the crier.
No school is built, without his fulsome prayer,
Which fulsome prints, with fulsome praise, record ;
No wretch is tried for want, but he is there
In solemn session, sourest on the board,
Where, like Saint Peter, he denies his lord.
O, Cant and Cunning ! mark the contrast well ;
The poor, damn'd here, are thankful, though they
 pine ;
Through foul and fair, they limp t'wards heav'n or
 hell ;
While he, (snug martyr,) when the day is fine,
Seeks Abraham's bosom, and a Tory's wine.
King of bad ale and hares ! he shoots, and hunts ;
Then whips, or jails, the woe that cannot pay ;
Grants Lickgrub's license, and refuses Grunt's ;
Or fines poor Strap, who shaved on Sabbath
 day ;
And, like Saint Barebones, he detests a play.

Thrice-loyal Jefferies ! greet with shout and song
The heir of all the Noodles of past years,
Lord Robert Shallow ! ready, rough, and wrong,
He sheaths a world of wisdom in his ears,
Yet seems no witch, and is what he appears.
A sleepy watcher, he must feel to see,
And, born to teach, may yet be taught to read ;
Bound by an accident, he hates the free ;
And, deaf and blind when Truth and Justice plead,
Led by a shadow, seems to take the lead.
How like a snake, all frozen but the fangs,
His coldness threatens and his silence chills !
How like a poisonous icicle he hangs
O'er human hopes, and on the soul distils
All mean, malignant, and infectious ills !
The freezing cloud descends in snow or hail ;
The hill-born deluge floods the reedy fen ;
And shall not lords teach slaves, and Heav'n turn pale,
And the grave shudder, at this crowded den
Of wolves and worms ?—O Nature, are they men ?
O Time, is this the island of the just
And the immortal, in her virtues strong ?
The land of Shakspeare ? Worthy of our dust,
Because she guards the right, and loathes the wrong—
The land of Ireton's bones, and Milton's song ?
Rise, Bard of our Republic !—wherefore rise,
Like Samuel to the troubled King of old ?
Could'st thou flash living fire in Britons' eyes,

Would pigmy souls be minds of giant mould?
Oh, what could wake these worse than dead and
cold?

But thou, O Rock! that watchest freemen's graves!
Well may'st thou veil thy lofty brow in shade,
Scorning to look on boroughmongering knaves,
And game-law'd, corn-law'd, war-worn, parish-paid,
Rag-money'd, crawling wretches, reptile-flay'd!—
What nameless curse comes next? Degraded Rome!
How like a Cæsar of thy days of shame,
He lolls behind his steeds, that ramp and foam
Through crowds of slaves, with long submission tame.
Hacks, not worth harness, void of tail and mane!
All praise to him, to whom all praise is due!
To him whose zeal is fire, whose rancour raves;
Sworn anti-catholic, and tried true-blue;
Champion of game-laws, and the trade in slaves;
Mouth of the bread-tax; purchased tongue of knaves;
All praise to him!—a menial yesterday,
And now a kingling, served by hate and fear;
The upstart buyer of yon ruins grey,
That mock his tax-built pandemonium near!
Clerk! Thief! Contractor! Boroughmonger! Peer!
His mercy would be cruelty in hell;
His actions say to God, 'Submit to me!'
Dey of Starvation, dark and terrible!
Men's purses may submit to thy decree,
But why should conscience have no god but thee,

Thou charioted blasphemer? Hence, away
To Spain, or Naples, with thy loathsome scowl!
Why stay'st thou here, to fuddle tax'd tokay?
Go, be the Inquisition's holiest ghoul,
And gorge with blood thy sulky paunch of soul!—
But ye—poor Erin's cheerful exiles, born
To till the flint in unrepining pain!
Why bow ye to your foe, Hibernia's scorn?
This almoner, whom treadmills might disdain?
This pauper, worthier of the whip and chain?
Fools! let accusing scorn, in each calm eye,
Inform the tax-fed harpy and his hordes
That wrongs have brought forth thoughts which cannot die;
And that your wives have brought forth sons whose
words
Shall sting like serpents' teeth, and bite like swords.
For what? Sad neighbour of the western star!
Land of the daring deed and splendid song!
For thee—whom worse than fiends, with worse than
war
Aping base Cromwell, and his tyrant throng,
Torment for gold. Poor Land of deathless wrong!
Scathed Eden of the vainly roaring deep!
Are these thy gods?—the lowest of the low!
Are these the wolves, who make thy millions weep?
These lords of dungeons, partridge eggs, and woe,
That think the lightning's ruinous wing too slow?

But—Isle of Tears ! Hispania of the sea !
Mourner of ages, helpless in thy pain !
Still untransform'd, blood-weeping Niobe !
Mute, hopeless sufferer of the son-loved main—
Whom e'en thy own Fitzwilliam cheer'd in vain—
The dawn delay'd is nigh, the dismal morn,
The day of grief, without remorse and shame,
When of thy very famine shall be born
A fiend, whose breath shall wither hope, like
flame ;

Lean Retribution is his horrid name.
Behold his bare and sinew'd haggardness !
Behold his hide-bound arm, his fleshless thigh !
'Tis he ! the fearless and the merciless !
I see his cheek of bone, his lifeless eye,
His frown—which speaks, and there is no reply !
I hear his mutter'd scorn, his taunting strain :
' Oppressor ! hath thy bondage set us free ?
Is all thy long injustice worse than vain ?
Art thou, too, fall'n, scourged, trampled, weak as we ?
What ! hath our destitution beggar'd thee ?
And can'st thou tell why plunder'd states are poor ?'

II.

The wild words ceased, and o'er the blasted moor
Slow fled the form of that fierce regicide ;
While shriek'd beneath my feet the granite floor,

From stream to headlong stream. But, eager-eyed,
I gazed on stately shadows at my side ;
For buried kings, whose will, erewhile, was law,
Around me, like the ghost of Hamlet, kept
Their state majestic, arm'd ! And when I saw
Their cruel faces bathed in tears I wept.
But o'er my heart a deadlier chillness crept ;
My white locks, every hair fear-stricken, stirr'd ;
My limbs, all shaken, trembled every bone ;
My pulse stood still ! and in my soul I heard
The torrent, tumbling o'er the cold, grey stone,
Prophecy !—while the shadowy mountains lone,
That saw the Roman eagle's wearied wing—
Spake to the silence of the dead of old :
' King of the Poor ! thou wast, indeed, a king.
But com'st thou sorrowing from the charnel cold ?
Henry Plantagenet, the uncontroll'd !
Why ? Did thy gracious servants bid thee reign
O'er bread-tax'd vermin, and transform thy name
Into a synonyme and type of pain,
Written o'er famish'd realms in tears and flame ?
King of the People ! royal is thy fame ;
Thou need'st not blush.'—' First Edward ! thou here,
too ?

King of the Kingdom, hail ! But on thy brow
Why grows the saddening cloud ? Is Peterloo
A nobler word than Falkirk ? or wast thou
The nominee of kinglings, such as now

Ordain what shall be best for states and thrones?
Did men like them, when thou wast loved and
fear'd,
Glut death with blood, and cover earth with bones?'—
'Third Edward! weepst thou? O prince revered!
Lord of the lance, to chivalry endear'd!
Still dost thou mourn the fall'n, the unrestored?
And was Napoleon, with his burning brain
Chain'd to the sunbeam, less to be deplored
On his hard rock, amid the groaning main,
Than captive John, with princes in his train,
Served by mute kings and pensive victory?
But thou art not that Edward who gave laws
To wolfish anarchists. Thou less than he
Who tamed the feudal beast, and pared his claws,
And tore the venomous fangs from rabid jaws,
And by and for the nation reign'd a king!
Dost thou, too, weep thy country's failing weal?
O doubt not that futurity will bring
For her a purchaser! The North hath steel,
The South hath gratitude; and slaves can feel—
What can they feel? the rankling of their chain.'"

III.

Our souls are lyres, that strangely can retain
The tones that trembled on their stricken chords;
And these, impress'd upon my heart, remain:

But the sad monarchs, leaning on their swords,
Vanish'd in darkness, with the closing words,
Like voiceless mists o'er ocean's sleepy waves.

IV.

What saw I next? A temple paved with graves !
Lo ! on the floor a giant corpse lay bare !
And thousand, thousand, thousand, thousand slaves,
All dead and ghastly, kneel'd for ever there,
Statues of baseness, worshipping despair !
From many a battle-field and many a sea,
Cast forth by outraged earth and loathing tide,
They made a winter for eternity,
And seem'd like suppliant demons side by side,
For in their looks their crimes were petrified.
Bound by a spell, which ne'er, methought, would
break ;
Amid the dead I stood, the living one !
And, lo ! the tears were froz'n on every cheek !
Ah, ne'er in solitude felt I so lone,
As in that crowd, whose tears were turn'd to
stone !
The Titan corpse, sublime in stillness lay,
With marble looks, like power and pride asleep ;
O God ! its dreadful silence could dismay
More than the shriek of shipwreck o'er the deep !
And every lifeless form did seem to weep,
Gazing in trancèd horror and remorse,

On the sad features of the mighty dead,
While, on the forehead of that giant corpse,
In letters of eternal fire, I read
This sentence : " I am he for whom ye bled,
Undying Death !—feast, Dogs, but lap no blood."

v.

Then, lo ! what, distant, seem'd the ocean's flood,
Smote on my heart, with clamour fierce and foul.
Wave shouldering wave, they shook me where I
stood.

No winds urged on the billowy, living roll,
But whirlwind dwelt within it, like a soul,
Heaving the foamy, roaring surges high,
While all beside was voiceless, breathless fear ;
And, lo ! the foam was human agony,
Alive with curses, horrible to hear !
The waves were men !—a deluge wide and drear !
And while, all raving, all at once, they came,
Heap'd on each other, to devour the shore,
The flash of eyes made heav'n's red vengeance
tame !

The thunder dared not whisper to the roar ;
When, with their multitudinous hands, they tore
The rocks, that seem'd to live in bestial forms.
Lo ! frozen there, the tiger's terror glared ;
Stiffen'd the startled folds of fangèd worms ;

Wolves grinn'd, like nightmare ; glassy caymen
stared ;

And the boar's tusk, his powerless tusk, was bared
In fear—a tyrant's fear ! High over head,
The despot eagle ceased his prey to tear ;
His mighty pinions not for battle spread,
But stretch'd to fly, and palsied by despair.
Oh, what a hell of silent pangs was there,
When, like an angel sweeping worlds away,
Did that resistless sea of souls assail
And crush his foes to dust, in dreadful play,
Rending the monsters and their granite mail !
Then all was hush'd ! a sea without a sail !
And, black with death, a strand of gory mud !

VI.

The vision changed ; and, lo ! methought I stood
Where sinners swelter in the penal glare
Of everlasting noon ! A fiery flood,
As of steel molten, on their nerves all bare,
Rush'd from the brazen sky ; and scorching air
Burn'd upward from red rocks of solid fire.
There I beheld a statesman, evil-famed,
With unremitting and intense desire
To quench immitigable thirst inflamed ;
Stretch'd, moaning, on the cinderous marl ; and
named,

In scorn and rage, by spectres pitiless,
Who bade him, smiting their clench'd hands, restore
Their homes, their innocence, their happiness ;
And, in dire mockery, to his hot lips bore
Rags, steep'd in black, thick, slippery, burning gore.
But when he dozed, worn out with pain, he dream'd
Of fire, and talk'd of fire that ever burn'd ;
And through his frame, in all his vitals gleam'd
Fire ; and his heart and brain, to cinder turn'd,
Still crack'd and blazed, while, tossing, low he
 mourn'd,
And from his eyes dropp'd tears of sable flame.
For now no longer in his fraudulent brain
Schoon'd dreams of crime-bought good untinged with
 shame,
False as the mists that loom along the main
With shows of golden Ophir, sought in vain
Where fiends of shipwreck watch their prey, and
 smile.

VII.

Yet seem'd he not the vilest of the vile.
An apparition cold of life in stone,
Or life in ice, drew nigh, with lips of bile ;
A visage to the awed spectators known,
That turn'd to frigid rancour, like his own,
Their fiery hatred. Frozen where they stood,

Chain'd by his smile petrific, and his eye
Whose serpent keenness sadden'd while it blazed—
“ Make way ! ” they yell'd, “ the fatal fool draws nigh :
The dog of kings, their whip for poverty,
Seeks here the luxury of infernal tears.”
Then shriek'd the prostrate wretch, as black he
rose—

“ Even here Democracy his standard rears !
Save me, my Brother, from unutter'd woes,
Worse even than Paine deserved or Ireland knows ! ”
“ Thee ? Aspect mean ! ” replied the new-arrived,
“ Thee ? And am I thy brother ? Lo, on thee
I look with scorn—Driv'ler ! whose fears contrived
To thrall arm'd kings, whom I was born to free.
And dost thou claim fraternity with me ?
I blew not up a spark into a flame
That set the earth on fire : I drove no trade
In petty retail havoc : No ! I came,
I saw, I conquer'd ; and a world dismay'd
Found safety in my daring, that array'd
Slaves, who in freedom's fight like freemen fought,
And still are slaves.” Then, turning to the crowd
Of silent spectres—who regarded nought
But him, such awe controll'd them—he, with proud
Scorn, read their abject fear, and cried aloud—
“ Hence, vile Plebeians ! know your lord.” And well
The abject ghosts obey'd ; for, while he spoke,
He raised his hand to strike ; but, ere it fell,

Approaching sounds, that in the distance broke
Murmuring, arrested the descending stroke.
As, when black midnight melts from sky to sky,
And shriek the lightnings at the wrath of heav'n,
Air becomes fire, and, like a sea on high,
Wide whirlwind rolls his deluge, sear'd and riv'n,
While, with closed eyes, guilt prays to be forgiv'n,
So, sight shrank, conquer'd, from his visage froze,
That mock'd insulted fire with icy glare,
While seem'd the torrid clime to burn the more
As if incensed, and sounds swell'd on the air
Which told of foes that knew not how to spare.
Soon, spectre skeletons, like wolves in chase,
Came howling on. As outstretch'd greyhounds
fleet,
Some with riv'n ribs, and one with half a face,
They came, all hungry, and their clattering feet
Stamp'd on the soil of adamantine heat.
Then sprang they on him, and his muscles rent
With cranching teeth ; and still their hate increased
As fast it fed, and joyful sounds forth sent ;
Yet from the rapturous banquet oft they ceased,
Exclaiming, in the pauses of the feast,
" Ice-hearted Dog !—when fell the crimson dew
At Wexford, there we died !—In dungeons we !
We of slow famine !—We at Peterloo !
We, by the mercy of the scourge set free ! "
Unvanquish'd by relentless torture, he,

While crisp'd in fire his cold flesh, scorch'd and torn,
Forgot not, though he wept, the bearing high
And proud demeanour of a tyrant born,
But cried, uplooking to the hopeless sky—
“Thou, who inhabitest eternity !
Here, too, thy frown is felt, thy mercy just.”
But when those skinless dogs of hell had pared
The bones of their oppressor, and, with gust
Infernal, crunch'd his vitals, till the bared,
Cold, burning heart, with pulses unimpair'd,
Shone in its grated chamber, like a light
That saddens some snaked cavern's solitude ;
Then, pangs of deathless hunger in their might.
Wrung savage howlings from his soul subdued ;
And, thenceforth and for ever, he pursued,
Heading that dismal pack, the sentenced dead,
For food, for food ! hunter of souls ! with yell
Immortal, hounding on his fiends, while fled
Their prey, far shrieking through unbounded hell.
In ravenous ardour, sateless, horrible,
He champ'd together still his stony jaws.
O could the living heirs of fear and hate
See the lost trampler on eternal laws,
Taught by his voice of mourning, ere too late,
How would they shun his crimes to shun his fate,
And, e'en for mean self-love, be less than fiends !

BOOK VIII.

CONTENTS.

Ezra White unroofs the Cottage of Hannah Wray, the Widow of an imputed Poacher—He detects her and her Daughter in the Act of re-roofing their Cottage—He assaults the Mother, and is killed by the Daughter—Imprisonment, Trial, and Death of Hannah Wray.

I.

Kind souls ! ye jail the peasant, while ye plough
The wild that loved to laugh around his home.
Where the broad common fed his father's cow,
And where himself, a fearless boy, could roam
Unquestion'd, lo ! the infant rivers foam
No longer, through a paradise of fern !
Look how, like burden'd slaves, they steal through
fields
That sullenly obey your mandate stern !
And how the tortured waste, reluctant, yields
Corn bought with souls, while soulless avarice builds
His palace, rafter'd with iniquity !

II.

Storm-smitten rock ! and thou, time-wrinkled tree !
Where is the sun-loved cottage that of old
Ye screen'd from envious winds ? And where is he

Who dwelt in that lone cottage of the wold?
Far from the mountain bee he slumbers cold.
Thou, Enoch Wray, shalt hear the son no more
Who kill'd the harmless hare that ate his kale :
Atrocious crime ! for which he sternly bore
Slow pain and wasting fever, in a jail.
He perish'd there. Then died his widow pale,
Who sleeps unsepulchred, and yet sleeps well.
But silly Jane, their child, still wanders here,
Seeking her mother on the stormy fell.
While freezes as it flows the scalding tear,
She lifts her left hand to her heart in fear,
And waves a fan of bracken in the right,
Forbidding evil sprites to melt the snow
That veils the fields once till'd by Ezra White.
Hark ! how she grinds her teeth, and mutters low,
With black lips quivering — “ God, let nothing
grow ! ”

For Ezra White unroof'd their humble home,
And thrust them forth, and mock'd the mother's woe,
Bidding her, with her brat, a beggar roam,
Or hire a hearth of him who feeds the crow,
Or to the Workhouse, hope-abandon'd, go.
“ I to the Workhouse ?—I ? ” the widow cried,
And from her shoulders ript the kerchief thin,
Displaying to the tyrant, elder-eyed,
A breast that might have tempted saints to sin,
While all th' impassion'd woman raged within—

“ I to the Workhouse ? ” and her forehead burn’d,
And swell’d the tortured heart that would not break ;
And her neck thicken’d, and her visage turn’d
Black, and she gasped, long impotent to speak :
“ I !—to the Workhouse ? Rather will I seek
The welcome grave. But hope not thou to thrive !
Though, feeding on old crimes, and plotting new,
Thou yet may’st crawl, the meanest thing alive ;
Here and hereafter thou shalt have thy due,
And this vile deed with snakes shall whip thee, Jew !
Am *I* thy tenant ?—did *I* bid thee pay
The Squire my rent ?—and are three pounds eleven ?
Thou tyrant !—yet shall come thine evil day ;
Yet shalt thou find there is a God in heav’n,
Although thy two fat farms have swallow’d seven.
God ! see this glutton ! how he crams and grasps,
Like death, for more—a beast of pray’r and prey.
Would all their maws were stuff’d with stings of wasps !
When shall I see them, on the bare highway
Toil, like their betters, for a groat a-day ?
God ! let him sow in vain ! let nothing grow !
Be straw his harvest, grainless chaff his food !
To-morrow he will marry wealth and woe ;
(Ah, Lucy Hargrove is for him too good !)
But may a mother’s curse be on his blood !
May he die childless ! ” And she turn’d, and bent,
In passionate fondness, o’er her idiot child,
Weeping ; then took her hand in haste, and went,

She cared not whither, uttering curses wild ;
But paused, and groan'd, while Jane look'd up and
smiled,
When Ezra's parting sneer shot through her brain.

III.

Morn rose, all splendid, o'er the frosty plain,
And Lucy Hargrove married Ezra White.
But Ezra strove to cheer his bride in vain ;
Long stay'd the day, and linger'd long the night ;
For Hannah's curse was on them like a blight.
The homeless widow seem'd to haunt their bed—
The idiot child to thunder at the door.
“They fire the stacks,” he growl'd ; “I hear their
tread.”
“O give them back their cottage on the moor ;
How canst thou prosper if thou rob the poor ?”
Cold lay the moonbeam on the glittering rock,
When Ezra gruffly left his troubled bride ;
His early steps alarm'd the wondering cock ;
And the fox saw him on the dim hill side,
Plodding through molten snow, with cautious stride
And horrid instinct, hither. But, behold !
Here laboured Hannah Wray, and silly Jane,
Fearless of blinding sleet, and blue with cold,
Busily roofing their sad cot again.
Flash'd Ezra's eyes, and rage fired every vein,

As when men wound a tiger. On he sprung,
And grasp'd the struggling widow by the throat,
Till white her eyes upturn'd, and forth her tongue
Protruded through retracting lips that caught
Sad hues from coming death, while anguish wrought
Terrific changes on her pensive cheek.
But Jane took up a stone, and smote his brow.
He fell, but held his prey ; with strangled shriek,
He tried to heave his bulk, relaxing slow
His murderous gripe, and backward sank ; then low
Dropp'd his large chin, and grim he gaped in
death !

But long lay Hannah senseless—happy she,
If, senseless, she had yielded up her breath.
But her eyes closed, then open'd—what to see ?
She gazed on Ezra's corpse in agony ;
'Then on her daughter ; and then gush'd her tears.
The horrid future on her spirit gleam'd ;
She trembled with unutterable fears ;
And, while the wan dawn o'er the mountains
beam'd,

She clasp'd her daughter to her breast and scream'd—
“No, I can die ! they shall not hang my child !”
Then came the hue and cry ; the parting wild
Of sunder'd bosoms, ne'er again to meet ;
The dungeon'd weeks ; and hope, that never smiled.
Yet once, in slumber, came a vision sweet,
Which bore her spirit to the dear retreat

Where still, she thought, her husband dwelt, and
Jane

Still press'd the nipple, pillow'd on her breast ;
The grave had lost its prey ; the past its pain ;
The dead had never died ! But thoughts so bless'd
Could not endure. A darker dream oppress'd
The dosing captive. Not to see her die,
But dead, she thought, her child arrived, at last ;
She saw herself a corpse ; saw Jane draw nigh
Shrieking, to gaze upon that corpse, aghast ;
And, shrieking, waked, with temples throbbing fast !
Then came the trial brief ; the evidence
So clear, so false, so fatal ; the sad eyes,
All gazing on convicted innocence,
But not in pity ! her convulsive sighs,
Her sudden tears ; the dread solemnities
Of sentence on the wrong'd and guiltless !—Oh,
Was there no pleader, by the laws allowed,
To aid the sufferer in her hour of woe ?
No—not a voice in all that awe-struck crowd
Was raised for her whom fate had stunn'd and
bow'd ;
For her, who *then* must plead, or ne'er again.
Dreadful, O Death, are all thy paths of pain !
And many a wretch hath felt, but who shall tell
What pangs unnamed the convict must sustain,
Ere frailty, pale as snow, bids hope farewell,
And, for the living, tolls the passing bell ?

Still, in her desolation, nightly she
Dream'd that the Lord had heard her earnest prayer ;
Her child, she thought, poor Jane, was come to see
Her mother die, and beg a lock of hair,
Which she might kiss in tears and ever wear.
Dark roll'd the hours by cruel mercy given,
The waking hours of certainty and doom ;
And, in her cell, she cried to earth and heav'n,
" O let my child sleep with me in the tomb !
Tomb ! I shall have none ! " And the echoing gloom
Mutter'd, even when she slept, her heavy sigh.

IV.

As if no heart had ever ached, no eye
Shed bitter tears, another morn arose,
All light and smiles ; but, with the brightening sky,
Hannah awoke from dreams of death, to close
Her eyes in dreamless and profound repose.
But Jane came not ! poor Jane was far away ;
She, though oft told, knew not her mother's doom ;
But much she wonder'd at her lengthen'd stay,
With saddening thoughts, and cheek that lost its
bloom.

Hark ! the bell tolls ! and yet Jane is not come !
" But she, who murder'd pious Ezra White,
And trampled on his brains," (so rumour lies,)
Ere minutes pass, must wrestle with the might

That none can vanquish. Lo ! ten thousand eyes
Are gazing on the prison where she sighs !
The streets are paved, the house-tops piled with
heads,
The windows choak'd with faces, anxious all
To look on all that man most hates and dreads.
Now the hush deepens near the fetter'd wall ;
Now a dropp'd feather might be heard to fall ;
Now, by the scaffold, hearts throb quick and loud ;
Now, in dire stillness, hark, faint murmurs rise !
And, lo ! the murderess bends above the crowd,
Bursting, with desperate strength, the cord that
ties
Her arms, and rolling on all sides her eyes !
Chill'd, in a moment, chill'd is every heart.
“Where is my child ?” she sobs ; “My child !” she
shrieeks ;
“O let me see my child, ere I depart !”
And long, for her who is not here, she seeks ;
Then, to the crowd, with hands uplifted, speaks :
“Ye come to see a murderess ? I am none.
A stainless conscience is my rock and tower.
’Tis true my foe to his account is gone ;
But not for all this world’s vain pomp and power
Would I have shorten’d his bad life an hour.
I die his victim, and die reconciled.
Kind hearts ! ye melt—but which of ye will bear
A dying mother’s keepsake to her child ?

O for a kindred heart, my grief to share ;
A kindred voice, to join my parting prayer !”
Lo ! as she ended, on her bosom bent
A blind old pilgrim, who had left the throng
Weeping aloud, all pitied as he went !
She clasp'd him with a grasp convulsed and strong—
She kiss'd him fervently, and held him long.
“ God bless thee, Enoch, for this last good deed !”
She sobb'd—and down her cheeks the tears gush'd
free.

“ But we must bear whatever is decreed.
Nay, father of my Joe, be firm, like me !
Hold up ! be firm, as innocence should be !
Guiltless I go to join thy son in heaven.
Jane, too, is guiltless, though she kill'd our foe,
Who, when he died, had need to be forgiv'n.—
Bear to my child this tress ; a month ago
'Twas raven black, and now 'tis white as snow.
Yes, Enoch, I am guiltless. Let them pare
My bones, and make a mockery of my frame ;
They cannot stain my soul ! and I can bear
What must be borne. Why, then, should my sad name.
Whenever utter'd, flush thy cheek with shame ?
Poor Enoch ! where thy murder'd son lies low,
I hoped to weep again ; but hope deceives !
O might I rest with him !—no flower will blow
O'er me, no redbreast cover me with leaves !
'This thought, despite my will, appals and grieves

My conquering soul, ere it take wing and soar.
Should one or two remember me in love,
Say I died guiltless.—Though we meet no more
On earth, an angel waits for us above ;
But thou shalt nurse awhile my orphan dove,
Far from the parent bird—when I am free !”

V.

And all is o'er—the shock, the agony,
The low-breathed moan of sympathetic woe.
But silly Jane, still wandering gloomily,
Wears on her breast the lessening lock of snow ;
And still she mutters, “ God ! let nothing grow :
God ! may a mother’s curse be on their blood !”



BOOK IX.

CONTENTS.

Secret Sorrow and Illness of Enoch Wray—He takes leave of
Objects associated in his Mind with the Past.

I.

WHY is our father’s look so full of pain ?
What silent malady, what secret woe,
Weighs on his gloomy heart and dizzy brain ?
An evil which he seeks, yet dreads to know,
Not yet assured, suspected long ago.

Hath the dark angel of the night, that still
Delights in human agony and tears,
Appall'd his slumbers with predicted ill,
And confirmation of his worst of fears?
The cause I tell not, but th' effect appears
In sudden alteration, such as oft
Comes on the unailing agèd, when they seem
Strong as old eagles on the wing aloft.
Swift was the change and ghastly, as the gleam
Of baleful meteors on a midnight stream,
Blighting the waters. His Herculean frame
Stood, in the winds of March, erect and bold;
But when the cowslip—like a living flame
Kindled in April—burn'd its incense cold,
He seem'd the shadow of himself, and roll'd,
With a strange keenness, his benighted eyes.

II.

Bright shines the ice o'er which the skater flies,
Roofing the waters with transparent stone,
Firm as the rock, when umber'd evening dies,
But when the cloudy morn arises—gone.
So perish human glories, every one.
Oh, ne'er again, ye misty mountains dim!
When the frost parcheth on your sides the heath,
Shall its shrill histie whistle welcome him

Who once could see the tempest toss beneath
Your solemn brows, and to the vales bequeath
The volley'd hail, from clouds of every hue.

III.

The meanest thing to which we bid adieu,
Loses its meanness in the parting hour.
When long-neglected worth seems born anew,
The heart that scorns earth's pageantry and power
May melt in tears, or break, to quit a flower.
Thus, Enoch—like a wretch prepared to fly,
And doom'd to journey far, and come no more—
Seeks old acquaintance with a boding sigh.
Lo! how he weeps for all he loved of yore,
Telling to weeds and stones quaint stories o'er!
How heavily he climbs the ancient stile,
Whence, on the hill which he no more shall climb,
Not with a brief, albeit a mournful smile,
He seems to gaze, in reverie sublime,
Till heard afar and saddening all the clime,
Slow swings from yonder tower the passing bell!

IV.

There is a flower—the housewife knows it well—
A flower, which long hath graced the warm hedge
side
Of Enoch's dying neighbour, Andrew Gell;

Whose spleeny sire he pummell'd for his pride,
Ere beauteous Mary Gold became a bride.
It is the flower which (pious rustics say)
The virgin-mother on her bosom wore.
It hoards no dew-drop, like the cups of May,
But, rich as sunset, when the rain is o'er,
Spreads flamy petal from a burning core ;
Which, if morn weep, their sorrowing beams unfold,
To wake and brighten, when bright noon is near.
And Enoch bends him o'er the marigold ;
He loves the plant, because its name is dear.
But on the pale green stalks no flowers appear,
Albeit the future disc is growing fast.
He feels each little bud with pleasing pain,
And sighs in sweet communion with the past ;
But never to his lip, or burning brain,
The flower's cold softness shall he press again,
Murmuring his long-lost Mary's virgin name.

v.

Deep in the vale, where, known to humble fame,
Poor Enoch's rival in immortal verse,
The Village Poet, lives—well skill'd to frame
The beauteous slipper, and the sonnet terse,
Wise to compose, and willing to rehearse ;
A kind good man, who knows our father's worth,
And owns his skill in everything but rhyme ;
Sage, too, and meek, as any wight on earth.

Save that he laughs at transitory time,
And deems his own a deathless name sublime ;—
There, by the brook, cowers a low edifice,
With honeysuckled wall, and ivied roof,
A warm safe nest, in which two mortal mice
Might slumber through existence, far aloof
From city folks, whose sickly looks give proof
That, whatsoe'er is theirs, thou, Health, art not.
A dial, by our skilful father made,
Instructs the inmates of that little cot ;
The masterpiece, which first his skill display'd,
When all to him their wondering homage paid.
Lo ! on a visit, mournfully he wends,
To feel the dial, his acquaintance old ;
But, by the way, in pensive musing bends
O'er ancient landmark, now half sunk in mould :
Shake hands, sad friends, for times are changed and
cold !

But, lo ! he enters at the garden gate !
Awhile in chat the rival poets stand :
He feels the bench, where, oft in youth he sate ;
The shed, which, long ago, he built and plann'd ;
And now the dial is beneath his hand.
Ah, the slow shadow, measuring the swift hours,
While his touch wanders o'er the figured plane,
Baffles his patient finger's cunning powers !
But man, the shadow, mocks grey Time in vain !
Dusky, we pass away ; he laughs amain ;

His sportive trade it is to mow us down ;
 He plays at death, and is industrious too !
 Thou dark and sorrowing mortal, yet unmown,
 Weep—but thy sun-clock, as of old, is true !
 Oh, better weep than do as others do,
 Whose eyes discredit all save what they see !
 But *thou* deny'st not beauty, colour, light ;
 Full well thou know'st, that, all unseen by thee,
 The Vernal Spirit, in the valleys bright,
 Is scattering diamonds over blossoms white.
 She, though she deign to walk, hath wings of gold
 And plumes all beauteous ; while in leafing bower,
 The chrysalis, that ne'er did wing behold,
 Though born to glide in air o'er fruit and flower,
 Disproves the plume, the beauty, and the power,
 And deems it quite impossible to fly.

VI.

Farewell ye mountains, neighbours of the sky !
 Enoch will tread your silky moss no more ;
 But here he breathes your freshness. Art thou
 nigh,
 Grey moth of April ? On the reedy shore,
 For the last time he hears thee, circling o'er
 The starry flower. Broad poplar, soon in bloom,
 He listens to thy blossomy voice again,
 And feels that it is vernal ! but the tomb

Awaits him, and thy next year's flow'rs, in vain,
Will hearken for his footsteps. Shady lane,
Where Fearn, the bloody, felt his deadly arm !
Gate, which he climb'd, to cut his bow of yew
From the dark tree of ages ! Upland farm,
His uncle's once ! thou furzy bank, whose hue
Is of the quenchless fire ! adieu, adieu,
For ever ! Thy soft answer to the breeze,
Storm-strengthen'd sycamore ! is music yet
To his tired spirit : here, thou King of Trees,
His own hand did thine infant weakness set ;
But thou shalt wear thy palmy coronet
Long, long, when he is clay. Lake of the Mill,
That murmurest of the days when vigour strung
His oary feet, farewell ! He hears thee still,
And in his heart beholds thy banks, o'erhung
By every tree thou knew'st when he was young !
Forge !—built by him, against the ash-crown'd rock,
And now with ivy grown, a tussock'd mound—
Where oft himself, beneath the hammer's shock
Drew forth the welded steel, bright, blue, and
sound !

Vale of the stream-loved abbey, woodland-bound !
Thou forest of the Druids ! O thou stone,
That once wast worshipp'd !—pillar of the past,
On which he lean'd amid the waste alone !
Scorner of change ! thou listenest to the blast
Unmoved as death ; but Enoch travels fast.

Thatch'd alehouse, still yclept the Sickles cross'd !
Where died his club of poverty and age—
Worst blow of all ! where oft the blacksmith toss'd
His truth-deciding coin ; and, red with rage,
The never-silenced barber wont engage
In argument with Enoch ! Fountain dim,
In which his boyhood quench'd the sultry beam !
School, where crown'd monarchs might have learn'd
of him

Who sway'd it, how to reign ! Cloud-cradled stream,
That in his soul art eloquent as a dream !
Path-pencill'd hill, now clad in broomy light !
Where oft in youth he waked the violets cold,
When you, love-listening stars, confess'd the might
Of earthly beauty, and o'er Mary Gold
Redden'd with passion, while his tale he told !
Rose, yet unblown ! thou future woodbine flower !
Majestic foxglove, still to summer true !
Blush of the hawthorn ! glad May's sunny shower !
Scenes long beloved, and objects dear, adieu !
From you, from earth, grey Enoch turns his view ;
He longs to pass away, and soon will pass.
But not with him will toil and sorrow go !
Men drop, like leaves—they wither, and, alas !
Are seen no more ! but human toil and woe
Are lasting as the hills, or ocean's flow,
Older than Death, and but with Death will die.

VII.

Ye sister trees, with branches old and dry !
Tower'd ye not huge as now, when Enoch Wray,
A happy lad, pursued the butterfly
O'er broomy banks, above the torrent's spray,
Whence still ye cast the shadow of your sway ?
Lo—Grey-hair'd Oaks, that sternly execrate
The poor man's foes, albeit in murmurs low !
Or, with a stormy voice, like that of fate,
Smiting your wrinkled hands, in wrath and woe,
Say to th' avenging lightnings, " Why so slow ?"
Lo ! that glad boy is now a man of pain !
Once more he totters through the vernal fields ;
Once more he hears the corncrake on the plain ;
The vale invites him, where the goldring builds,
And the wild bank that primrose fragrance yields ;
He cannot die, without a sad adieu
To one sweet scene that to his heart is dear ;
Yet—would he dream his fears may not be true,
And miss a draught of bitterest sorrow here—
His feet will shun the mill-dam, and the weir
O'er which the stream its idle brawling sends.

VIII.

But, lo ! t'wards Albert's mill the Patriarch wends !
(His own hands rear'd the pile : the very wheels
Were made by him ; and where the archway bends,

His name, in letters of hard stone, appeals
'To time and memory.) With mute step, he steals
Along the vale, but does not hear the mill !
'Tis long since he was there. Alas ! the wave
Runs all to waste, the mighty wheel is still !
Poor Enoch feels as if become a slave ;
And o'er his heart the long grass of the grave
Already trembles ! To his stealthy foot,
Around the door thick springs the chance-sown
oat.

While prune their plumes the water-hen and coot,
Fearless and fierce the rat and otter float,
Catching the trout in Albert's half-sunk boat :
And, pendent from each bucket, fat weeds dip
Their slimy verdure in the listless stream.
"Albert is ruin'd, then !" his quivering lip
Mutters in anguish, while with paler beam
His sad eye glistens. "'Tis, alas, no dream !
Heav'n save the blood of Enoch Wray from shame !
Shame undeserved, the treadmill of the soul !"
Thus Enoch mutely prays, but does not blame
Albert, who could not, well he knows, control
The fate that hurl'd him down to fortunes foul.
Triumphant Science ! what avail thy deeds,
'Thy sailless navy, and thy steam-drawn car,
If growing power to deeper misery leads ?
If weeds and worms thy tenfold harvest mar ?
And all thy fruits but fatten waste and war ?

England is changed since Enoch was a lad.
Grubs dream'd not then that earth for them was made ;
Men did not sweat to bloat the weak and bad,
In hopeless sorrow faithful though betray'd ;
Nor was toil famine ; nor was gambling trade.
Albert is strong, laborious, frugal, just ;
But danger lurk'd where safety seem'd to be,
And cloudless thunder turn'd his hopes to dust.
While navies sank on fortune's sunny sea,
Unskill'd to save his little bark was he.
In dreadful calm, the viewless storm increased ;
Most fatal, when least dreaded, came the blow
That still was nearest when expected least ;
And none who felt the stroke could see the foe ;
But all was wondering fear and helpless woe.
The servant took the master by the nose ;
The beggar'd master slunk aside to die ;
Down dropp'd the cobweb Crœsus, stunn'd ; he rose,
And fell again, he knew not how or why.
Like frost and thaw in April's fickle sky,
The wretched rich, and not less wretched poor,
Changed places miserably ; and the bad
Throve, while the righteous begg'd from door to door :
None smiled, save knaves ; but loudly laugh'd the mad,
Even at their prayers, and then they kick'd the sad.
And still men fought with shadows, and were slain.
For ruin smote, nor warning gave at all—
Unseen, like pestilence, and fear'd in vain !

But when red battle wings the whirling ball,
The cannon flashes ere the victims fall,
Loud bursts the roar, and then is heard the groan.

IX

What *is* this plague, unsearchable and lone,
Sightless and tongueless, till a wild voice howls
When nations die? What is this power unknown?
And whence this strange simoom that withers souls?
O ask the empire-swallowing deep, that rolls
Black o'er lost wealth and long-forgotten fame!

X.

Shall *I*, lost Britain! give the pest a name
That, like a cancer, eats into thy core?
'Tis Avarice, hungry as devouring flame;
But, swallowing all, it hungers as before,
While flame, its food exhausted, burns no more.
O ye hard hearts that grind the poor, and crush
Their honest pride, and drink their blood in wine,
And eat their children's bread without a blush,
Willing to wallow in your pomp, like swine,
Why do ye wear the human form divine?
Can ye make men of brutes, contemn'd, enslaved?
Can ye grow sweetness on the bitter rue?
Can ye restore the health of minds depraved?

And self-esteem in blighted hearts renew?
Why should souls die to feed such worms as you?
Numidian ! who didst say to hated Rome—
“ There is no buyer yet to purchase thee ! ”
Come, from the damn'd of old, Jugurtha, come !
See one Rome fall'n !—another, mightier, see !
And tell us what the second Rome shall be !
But long, O Heav'n ! avert from this sad land
The conflict of the many with the few,
When, crumpled, like a leaf, in havock's hand,
The great, the old, shall vanish from the view,
And slaves be men, all traitors, and all true !
Nor from the fierce and iron-breathing North,
That grimly blossoms with the sword and spear,
Call a new Alaric and his robbers forth,
To crush what worth is left untrampled here,
And shake from Freedom's urn dust still too dear,
While trade-left Thames pours mute his shipless wave !
But thou, our Father, journeyest to the grave,
A Briton, like thy sires, the fear'd of old !
Thou shalt not see outlandish king or slave
Conquer the green isle of the stern and bold,
That despots, erst, though leagued with hell, controll'd.
The land where Hampden fell and Russell bled,
Is yet no barrack for invading hordes ;
Mary is undefiled, her boy unled
To slaughter, by their country's foreign lords.
Yet hast thou seen our fratricidal swords

Assail the bondsmen, struggling to be free ;
And strike for tyrants, destined, soon or late,
To thank our crimes, by which they reign, and be
Black vengeance to our hearths, and righteous fate.
But go !—no second spring can renovate
Thy blighted soul. A moment, big with woe,
O'er thee hath roll'd another hundred years.
Go, to the cottage of thy childhood, go !
Where green, as in thy youth, the vale appears,
And Mary's love awaits her sire, in tears.
Go to thy cottage—not with humbled look
And stealthy pace, a thing of guilt and fear !
But thou, alas, dependence canst not brook !
E'en pity now is insult to thine ear ;
Fall'n is thy crest, thy heart is cold and drear.
Yet go thou to thy home, though daily there
Some little comfort is retrench'd ; nor blame
The child, who veil'd her griefs her sire to spare.
“ Though Mary is become an ill-starr'd name,
Why should her father feel the pang of shame ? ”
How often from thy side doth she retire
To weep alone ! “ Shall he who gave us all—
Shall Enoch Wray, the soul of fearless fire,
The good, the proud, become in age a thrall ? ”
Oh, not for this the lord of shroud and pall
So long hath pass'd him on his gloomy way !
No ; he who hears the voiceless worm complain
Hath heard his spirit for dismissal pray :

“ O, let me, Lord, my God, till death, retain
My humble pride, a name without a stain !
When the flesh fail’d not, Lord, I lean’d on Thee !
Though the flesh fails, let not my soul be moved !
But now release me, if thy will it be—
O let thy child rejoin the lost and loved !
For long on earth have I thy mercy proved,
And my heart yearns to bless thy name in heav’n.”



BOOK X.

CONTENTS.

Horrors of Paupery to Independent Minds—Enoch Wray visits the
Churchyard, where he reads the Grave-Stones with his Fingers
—Death of the Patriarch.

I.

Life ! who would live, to be the helpless prey
Of sordid avarice ? O neglected Age,
That, bedrid, lingerest in prolong’d decay !
Who would, like thee, a war all hopeless wage
With foes that mock his grief and scorn his rage ?
How sad the sight, when, far from all he loves,
By crowds pursued, the slander’d terrier flies,
Till, wounded by his lord in unknown groves,

He mingles looks of love with piteous cries,
And, smiling on his dear destroyer, dies !
How terrible, to wake, interr'd alive,
And shriek for instant aid, which cannot come ;
And scare the worm, that yet shall feed ; and
strive,

Beneath relentless earth, in airless gloom,
With desperate wrench, to dispossess the tomb !
More dreaded still, lost Captive, is thy fate,
To whom a grave is given, and death denied,
For life entomb'd by unforgiving hate,
Who bids despair, thy chamberlain, provide
Hope's coffin'd corpse, to mate thy sleepless side !
But direr, sadder than all these, is man
Wasted by want and superhuman toil ;
Or fall'n from decent competence, and wan
With grief, and forced, while heart and brain recoil,
To beg a crust on his paternal soil,
Or ask his equals for a pauper's pay.

11.

But thou art not a pauper, Enoch Wray !
Free hast thou lived, in honesty and pride,
A hundred summers ; bright hath been thy day.
Even in its gloom ; and on the grave's dark side
Thou little hast to fear, and nought to hide—
Prepared to die, as good men wish to die.

III.

Hark !—like a spirit preaching from the sky,
“ Repent ye, for the kingdom is at hand ! ”
An iron voice—as if Eternity,
Dethroning Time, sent forth his high command—
Speaks to the awed heart of the silent land.
From yonder tower, time-darken'd, thunder-scarr'd,
Still the deep toll is floating on the air ;
It calls our father to the lone churchyard ;
Ah, many, many of his friends are there !
And Age, at five-score years, hath few to spare !
Thou antique Fane ! that, in thy solemn suit
Of carven flowers, and stone-embroidery grand,
(Old, yet unshaken ; eloquent, though mute,)
Tower'st like the sculptured guardian of the land !
Thy reverend looks what bosom can withstand,
And feel nor throb like love, nor chill like fear,
Nor glow like adoration ? The leaves fall
Around thee—men fall with them ; both are here ;
While thou alike view'st bridal-robe and pall,
Sovereign of marriage and of funeral !
Witness of Ages, and memorial hoar
Of generations, to eternity
Gone, like the hour that can return no more !
Grey Enoch is a child compared with thee ;
Yet man like him thou ne'er again shalt see !

How would it gladden thy bewilder'd eyes,
(Duskèd with cobweb films, and colours old,
And with long gazing on dim blazonries,)
Could'st thou, in these degenerate times, behold
A pair like Enoch Wray and Mary Gold,
As to the altar, in their youth, they came ;
He, like a warrior to the battle feast,
With cheek of downy light and umber'd flame,
A presence glorious as the bright'ning east ;
She, bending at his side, with charms increased,
Like chaste Andromache by Hector led ;
Her arm in his, her gentle eyes depress'd,
Her neck and face with burning crimson spread,
And lovely as maternal beauty's breast,
Beneath the soft cheek of her child caress'd,
Returning love for love and smile for smile !
But, oh, not now, thou venerable pile !
Comes he, with genial thoughts to rapture true,
But with sad heart, though not without a smile,
To bid his old remembrances adieu ;
And, ere he mingle with the clay, renew
Feelings, which, when the dust that moulders
 here,
Could sympathize with animated clay,
Joy'd with its joy, return'd it tear for tear,
And, bidding sorrow look for brighter day,
Pointed to heav'n, but did not "lead the way."
Now on the tombstones, which of old he laid,

(Pages with silent admonition fraught,)
 He kneels ; and, in the twilight of thy shade,
 Reads, with his fingers, what his chisel wrought ;
 Perchance th' effusions of his pensive thought,
 Full oft recited in his soul with pride.

IV.

Erect, like youth, stands this sepulchral stone :
 But what is youth ? a flower ; and life ? a dream.
 Read !—for youth, life, the flower, the dream, are
 gone :
 Read !—“ Death is life ! I *am* not what I seem :
 Think of poor Henry still ! but rightly deem.”

V.

The next is dateless ; but, aged eighteen years,
 Died she, whom hardest hearts have ceased to blame :
 The kind still read her epitaph with tears :—
 “ Here rests a stranger—she had once a name :
 Weep for the gentle dust that died of shame.”

VI.

They did not lay his bones where four roads meet.
 Although his crime was grief, which some called
 pride,
 Wrong not the wrong'd, who slumbers at thy feet !
 “ Was Jones a coward ? Honest, yet belied,
 He was too brave to live disgraced, and died.”

VII.

In yonder grave heaven's grateful debtor lies.
Struck blind in youth—old Shiloh Hollischart.
“The beam of beauty left his cheerful eyes,
To glow more deeply, brightly, in his heart.”
Read, mortal ! be instructed, and depart.

VIII.

“Tears for the slander'd ! tears—but shed too late.
Come ! if thou come to weep, traducer fell,
Whose slighted love hath done the work of hate !
But thou, perchance, hast yet more lies to tell
Of her who loved but thee, and loved too well ?”

IX.

This still retreat, thou faithful to the dead,
Claims thy attentive pause, demands thy tear !
Stop ! read again th' inscription, often read :—
“Remember me ; and, weeping, linger here,
If still to thee thy Harcourt's name is dear !
But, if thou wed again, O come not near !”

X.

A broken mast, a bursting wave, a child
Weeping, a woman frantic on the shore—
Rude stone ! thou tell'st a story sad and wild :—

“ Pain, want, unkindness, all ‘ afflictions sore,’
Disease, suspense, with constancy I bore ;
My heart was broken—Letty lies with me ;
And now we know that Matthew died at sea.”

XI.

No sculptured stone informs the passer by
That the poor clown is now the Squireling’s peer :
Here lies a rogue, whose crime was poverty !
And just Sir Cornlaw sleeps in marble near !
Bones of the treadmill’d slave !—what do ye here ?
Oh, shame to bread-tax’d England’s bought-and-sold !
The loathsome wretch, who toil’d, and starved, and
died,
And he whose merit was a robber’s gold,
Repose, like married equals, side by side !
Audacious Death, is Mammon thus defied ?
What, shall the parish-paid of yesterday
Rest with the sacred boroughmongering great ?
Why fence ye not a pauper’s Golgotha,
Where, buried without bell, these dogs may wait
The crowing cock, while rich men rot in state ?

XII.

But to one grave the blind man’s eyes are turn’d,
Move where he may—and yet he seeks it not.
He communes with the poor, the lost, the mourn’d,
The buried long, by all but him forgot :

The hated?—no ; his bosom never burn'd
With fire so base : the dreaded?—no ; he spurn'd
Fear, as unworthy of the human breast.
Why does he pause on his dark pilgrimage?
Hath he forgot what love remembers best?
O stoop and find, in this familiar page,
The mournful story, dearest to his age !
“ Here Lucy rests, who, in this vale of tears,
Dwelt thirty weeks :—Here waits the judgment-day
Her brother James, who died, aged fifty years :
Here slumbers sinless Anne, who lived a day :
Children of Mary and of Enoch Wray.”
His finger pauses, like a trembling wand,
Held o'er desponding hope by mercy. Lo !
Another line, cut by another hand,
On the cold stone, from which he riseth slow ;
But it is written on his heart of woe ;
“ Mary ! thou art not lost, but gone before.”

XIII.

Oh, no !—not lost. The hour that shall restore
Thy faithful husband, Mary, is at hand ;
Ye soon shall meet again, to part no more ;
By angels welcomed to their blissful land,
And wander there, like children, hand in hand,
To pluck the daisy of eternal May.

XIV.

It is the evening of an April day.
Lo ! for the last time, in the cheerful sun
Our father sits, stooping his tresses grey,
To hear the stream, his ancient neighbour, run,
Young as if time had yesterday begun.
Heaven's gates are like an angel's wing, with plumes
Of glorious green and purple gold on fire :
Through rifts of mountainous clouds, the light
 illumes
Hill-tops and woods, that, pilgrim-like, retire ;
And, like a giant's torch, burns Morthern spire.
Primrosy odours, violet-mingled, float
O'er blue-bells and ground-ivy, on their wings
Bearing the music of the blackbird's note ;
Beneath the dewy cloud the woodlark sings,
But on our father's heart no gladness flings.
Mary bends o'er him, mute. Her youngest lad
Grasps, with small hand, his grandsire's finger fast ;
Well knows the old man that the boy is sad ;
And the third Mary, as she hurries past,
Trembles, and looks towards the town aghast.
Enoch hears footsteps of unwelcome sound,
While at his feet the sightless mastiff lies ;
And, lo ! the blind dog, growling, spurns the ground !
" Two strangers are approaching," Enoch cries ;
But Mary's throbbing heart alone replies.

A stern, "Good day, sir!" smites his cheek more pale ;
A rude collision shakes him in his chair ;
The Bible of his sires is mark'd for sale !
But degradation is to him despair ;
The hour is come which Enoch cannot bear !
But he can *die* :—and in his humble grave,
Sweet shall his long rest be, by Mary's side ;
And o'er his coffin (uninscribed) shall wave
The willow tree, beneath the dark tower's pride,
Set by his own sad hand when Mary died.
Though basely branded with a poacher's name,
Poor Joseph slumbers in a distant tomb ;
Though Joseph's widow died a death of shame,
Still there was mercy in the old man's doom !
But now—dependence and disgrace are come !
"Albert," he sighs, "will perish by this blow.—
Where is he?"—No reply.—"And shall the throng
Of paupers see my daughter weekly go
For parish alms? No, Heav'n ! I yet am strong ;
Restore my sight ! or I have lived too long."
The vain, vain wish, too mighty, leaves him faint ;
His visage wan assumes a darkening hue ;
The blind dog whines a melancholy plaint,
And ghastly roll his eyes of pallid blue ;
E'en the hard bailiffs dread the scene to view.
Lyre of the past ! O, art thou, then, unstrung ?
The boy resigns his grandsire's finger cold ;
A sweet word lingers on our father's tongue—

“ Mary, dear Mary.”—But the tale is told :
With her whose virgin name was Mary Gold,
He hears, in heav’n, his swooning daughter
 shriek.

And when the woodbine’s cluster’d trumpet blows ;
And when the pink’s melodious hues shall speak,
In unison of sweetness with the rose,
Joining the song of every bird that knows
How sweet it is of wedded love to sing ;
And when the fells, fresh-bathed in azure air,
Wide as the summer day’s all golden wing,
Shall blush to heav’n, that Nature is so fair,
And man condemn’d to labour, in despair ;—
Then, the gay gnat, that sports its little hour ;
The falcon, wheeling from the ancient wood ;
The redbreast, fluttering o’er its fragrant bower ;
The yellow-bellied lizard of the flood ;
And dewy morn, and evening—in her hood
Of crimson, fringed with lucid shadows grand—
Shall miss the Patriarch ; at his cottage door
The bee shall seek to settle on his hand,
But from the vacant bench haste to the moor,
Mourning the last of England’s high-soul’d poor,
And bid the mountains weep for Enoch Wray !
And for themselves !—albeit of things that last
Unalter’d most ; for they shall pass away
Like Enoch, though their iron roots seem fast
Bound to the eternal future, as the past !

The Patriarch died ! and they shall be no more.
Yes, and the sailless worlds, which navigate
Th' unutterable deep that hath no shore, (^d)
Will lose their starry splendour, soon or late !
Like tapers, quench'd by Him whose will is fate !
Yes, and the Angel of Eternity,
Who numbers worlds, and writes their names in
 light,
Ere long, O Earth, will look in vain for thee,
And start, and stop, in his unerring flight,
And, with his wings of sorrow and affright,
Veil his impassion'd brow and heav'nly tears !



NOTES.



BOOK II.

- (^a) *And soon faint odours, o'er the vernal dew,
Shall tempt the wanderings of the earliest bee
Hither, with music sweet as poesy,
To woo the flower whose verge is wiry gold.*

The flower here alluded to is the *Polyanthus*, "the poor man's flower," which never deserts his garden, until hope has deserted him. It is the *Jacobin* of the vegetable kingdom; and when it is transplanted into the gardens of the great, it loses *all* its worth.



BOOK IV.

- (^b) *Nor did the widower learn again to smile,
Until his daughter to her Albert bore
Another Mary.*

"Another Mary Green
Is come to Goldrill side."—*Wordsworth.*



BOOK V.

- (^c) *Bee! that hast left thy sandy-coved retreat
Before the living purple hath purvey'd
Food for thee.*

I am told by a friend, that my natural history is incorrect. But

what I have seen, I can believe. On the 26th day of January, 1827, I saw the wild honeysuckle in leaf, and the hazel in flower; and towards the close of the following March, the wood-rose had kindled into full verdure, and the elm, the poplar, the willow, the celandine, the daisy, the windflower, and the primrose, were all in bloom; while the adder, the lizard, and the sand-bee, were rejoicing in the sunbeams.



BOOK X.

(^d) *Th' unutterable deep that hath no shore.*

It seems beyond the powers of the mind of any liminary being to conceive that space ever had a beginning, or that it ever can have an end.



THE SPLENDID VILLAGE.

IN TWO PARTS.



To Colonel THOMAS PERONNET THOMPSON, who, next after Bentham, has by his writings done more good for mankind than any other man since Adam Smith, this Poem is thankfully dedicated by his humble Pupil.



PART I.

THE WANDERER RETURNED.

I.

YES, ye green hills that to my soul restore
 The verdure which in happier days it wore !
 And thou, glad stream, in whose deep waters laved
 Fathers, whose children were not then enslaved !
 Yes, I have roam'd where Freedom's spirit fires
 The stern descendants of self-exiled sires ;
 Men who transcend the herd of human kind
 A foot in stature, half a man in mind.
 But tired, at length, I seek my native home,
 Resolved no more in gorgeous wilds to roam ;

Again I look on thee, thou loveliest stream !
And, seeming poor, am richer than I seem.
Too long in woods the forest-Arab ran,
A lonely, mateless, childless, homeless man ;
Too long I paced the ocean and the wild—
Clinging to Nature's breast, her petted child :
But only plough'd the seas to sow the wind,
And chased the sun to leave my soul behind.
But when hot youth's and manhood's pulses cool'd,
When pensive thought my failing spirit school'd—
Lured by a vision which, where'er I rove,
Still haunts me with the blush of earliest love—
A vision, present still, by night, by day,
Which not Niagara's roar could chase away—
I left my palace, with its roof of sky,
To look again on Hannah's face, and die,
I saw, in thought, beyond the billow's roar,
My mother's grave—and then my tears ran o'er !
And then I wept for Hannah, wrong'd, yet true !
I could not—no—my wasted life renew ;
But I could wiselier spend my wiser years,
And mix a smile with sinking vigour's tears.

II.

Sweet Village ! where my early days were pass'd !
Though parted long, we meet—we meet at last !
Like friends, embrown'd by many a sun and wind,
Much changed in mien, but more in heart and mind.

Fair, after many years, thy fields appear,
With joy beheld, but not without a tear.
I met thy little river miles before
I saw again my natal cottage door ;
Unchanged as truth, the river welcomed home
The wanderer of the sea's heart-breaking foam ;
But the changed cottage, like a time-tried friend,
Smote on my heart-strings, at my journey's end.
For now no lilies bloom the door beside :
The very houseleek on the roof hath died ;
The window'd gable's ivy-bower is gone,
The rose departed from the porch of stone ;
The pink, the violet, have fled away,
The polyanthus, and auricula !
And round my home, once bright with flowers, I
 found
Not one square yard—one foot of garden ground.

III.

With gun in hand, and insolence of eye,
A sun-burn'd menial, as I came, drew nigh ;
By might empower'd small felons to deter,
Constable, publican, and warrener.
He met me, muttering—"I should know this tramp ;"
He pass'd me, muttering "Vagabond" and "Scamp !"
And, as a beadle eyes a thief, he cast
A keen glance at the cottage, as he pass'd.

My brother dwelt within. 'Tis true, he took
My offer'd hand, but froze me with a look
So trouble-worn and lost, so hard yet dull,
That I shrank from him, though my heart was full ;
I sought society, but stood alone ;
I came to meet a man, and found a stone !
His wife, in tatters, watch'd the fireless grate ;
Three boys sat near her, all in fierce debate,
And all in rags—but one constructing snares,
With which, at night, to choke Lord Borough's hares.
My sister, Rose, had parish-pay, they said,
And Ann was sent abroad, and Jane was dead ;
And these misfortunes laid my sire beside
The mother, who in better days had died.
Such welcome found the wanderer of the deep !
I had no words—I sobb'd, but could not weep.

IV.

Well, here I am, resolved to view the land—
Inquire and ponder—hear and understand.

V.

The cucking-stool is gone, the stocks remain—
Why either or not both ? Ye stocks, explain !
Changed scene ! Unchanged yon frosted tower
 remains ;
Beneath the hill, it peers o'er vales and plains ;

And, like a patriarch of the olden time,
Sees age around, but none like his sublime.
Ere yon huge house, with jail-like frown, displaced
The wild brier roses of the thymy waste,
There, near the church, the stocks, and cucking-
stool,

Abode the sovereign of the village school.
A half-faced man, too timid for his trade,
And paid as timid men are ever paid ;
He taught twelve pupils for six pounds a-year,
Made a consumption, and was buried here.
None said of him, he reap'd the crop he grew,
And *lived* by teaching what he never knew.
His school is gone—but still we have a school,
Kept by an ignoramus—not a fool ;
For o'er his mansion, written large, we see
“ Mister John Suckemwell's Academy ;”
A boarding-school, where gentlemen are taught
To write fine copies, which the teacher wrote !
Behold the usher !—I behold and start !
For in his face I read a broken heart.
Servant of servants ! brow-beat by a knave !
Why for a coffin labour like a slave ?
Better break granite on the King's highway
Than earn, with Porson's powers, a pauper's pay !
Why die to live ? I know a wiser plan—
An easier too—black shoes, and be a man !

VI.

Village ! thy butcher's son, the steward now,
Still bears the butcher on his burly brow.
Oft with his sire he deigns to ride and stare ;
And who like them, at market or at fair ?
King of the Inn, he takes the highest place,
And carves the goose, and grimly growls the grace.
There, in the loud debate, with might—with might—
Still speaks he last, and conquers still the right ;
Red as a lobster, vicious as his horse,
That, like its master, worships fraud and force ;
And, if the stranger 'scape its kick or bite,
Lowers its vex'd ears, and screams for very spite.
“ He hath enough, thank God, to wear and eat ;
He gives no alms ”—not e'en his putrid meat ;
“ But keeps his cab, whips beggars from his door,
Votes for my Lord, and hates the *thankless* poor.”

VII.

Hail, Sister Hills, that from each other hide.
With belts of evergreen, your mutual pride !
Here reigns, in placid splendour, Madam Grade,
Whose husband nobly made a plum in trade ;
And yonder glitters Rapine's bilious slave,
The lucky footman of a palaced knave ;

Stern foe of learning, genius, press, and pen,
Who lauds all laws that ruin honest men.
Sublime in Satrap-imitating state,
She for her daughter seeks a titled mate ;
None other, not an angel wing'd from heav'n,
Could woo, or ask to woo, and be forgiv'n.
Too oft, perhaps, she calls her neighbour "Scrub !"
Yet justly scorns the mean corruption-grub ;
For many a "ruptured Ogden" hath he wrong'd,
Long gloating on the captive's chain prolong'd.
He hates and apes her pomp, with upstart haste ;
But what in him is pride, in her is taste.
She, queen-like, smiles ; he, blustering, crams and
treats,
And weighs his greatness by the trout he eats.
She never dogg'd a beggar from her lawn,
And he would hang all dogs that will not fawn.
Yet, Clerk of taxes, Magistrate, and Squire,
Why to be Premier may not he aspire ?
But what is he that haunts this upstart's door—
Yon fat, good fellow, who detests the poor—
Yon mass of meanness, baseness, grease, and
bone—
Yon jolly soul, that weighs just eighteen stone ?
Unmatch'd in quibble, great in If and But,
Sublime in cant, superlative in smut ;
He jests as none but British worthies can,
Laughs at despair, spurns, tramples fallen man,

Condemns misfortune for its wrongs and woe,
And bids his victim thank him for a blow.
Sworn friends are they, Squire Woolpack and Squire
Brush ;
One is their creed—" Impoverish ! torture ! crush !"
Behold two models, unexcell'd on earth,
Of British wisdom, loyalty, and worth !

VIII.

Broad Beech ! thyself a grove ! five hundred years
Speak in thy voice of bygone hopes and fears ;
And mournfully—how mournfully !—the breeze
Sighs through thy boughs, and tells of cottages
That, happy once, beneath thy shadow gazed
On poor men's fields, which poor men's cattle grazed !
Now, where three cotters and their children dwelt,
The lawyer's pomp alone is seen and felt ;
And the park-entrance of his acres three
Uncrops the ground which fed a family.
What then ? All see he is a man of state,
With his three acres, and his park-like gate !
Besides, in time, if times continue dark,
His neighbour's woes may buy his gate a park.
O, then, let trade wear chains, that toil may find
No harvests on the barren sea and wind ;
Nor glean, at home, the fields of every zone,
Nor make the valleys of all climes his own ;

But, with the music of his hopeless sigh,
Charm the blind worm that feeds on poverty !

IX.

Lo ; where the water-caster once abode,
The pinfold, erst his garden, skirts the road !
His ample cot, erewhile not ample call'd,
Is now with lath and lime partition-wall'd :
The humble dwelling of the leech divine
Makes six large styes for thirty human swine.
Oh ! could he see what woes his house contains,
What wretched remnants cram its broken panes,
How would he swell with righteous rage, and ban
Ice-hearted Law's forced charity to man !
For warmer heart than his did never beat !
Duped by himself, yet hated he deceit ;
And, pleased, he taught my boyhood how to draw
The woe-marked cowslip, and the thrush-loved haw ;
And how to make sweet pictures of wild flowers,
Cull'd in lone lanes, when glow'd the sultry hours,
Then press'd, and dried, and all on lawn dispread,
To look as infants do, that smile when dead.
Learnèd he was : nor bird nor insect flew
But he its leafy home and history knew ;
Nor wild-flower deck'd the rock nor moss the well
But he its name and qualities could tell.
Yes, he was learnèd—not with learning big,
Like yon budge doctor of the whip and wig,

Who writes in Latin, sucks the sick select,
Speaks in the Babylonish dialect,
And drives his pair. Great man, sir !—all who thrive
Are cured of colds and cash, by Doctor Drive.
Behold his mansion, southward of the grove,
Complete with coach-house—piggery—alcove !
And, mark ! the entrance hath an air of state—
Not copied from the lawyer's park-like gate !

X.

Two stone-throws from the Hall of Doctor Drive,
And from the village Workhouse four or five,
Where the swung Turkey, with its plumage rough,
Welcomes all loyal men who drink enough,
The flying curate lodges—doom'd to say
Three well-known sermons every Sabbath-day.
His donkey, like a rat without a tail,
Cost fifty shillings, and o'er hill and dale
Bears his lean master, at a hunter's pace,
Duly as comes his weekly steeple-chase.
The rector—a queer plural, one and three,
Yet not quite singular in trilogy—
Who, scandal says, is cousin to my Lord—
Would pay him better, but he can't afford.
He lives, they say, in London, and so forth ;
His country house is somewhere in the North.
Mine host much miss'd him when he left the lodge,
For fewer warrants summon Jem and Hodge.

XI.

Hail, ancient Inn ! once kept by Margaret Rose,
Ere England's wrongs began, and labour's woes ;
Inn of the Happy Village ! where, of old,
Before the bright yule log, my father told
His well-known story of the wolf and child,
While—not at him—the tickled youngsters smiled ;
And sturdy peasants, and the annual guest,
Praised the stout ale, but thought their own was best.
When Margaret reign'd, no wanderer pass'd thy door :
Dame Margaret's heart felt ever for the poor ;
And, well they knew, to homeless son or sire
She ne'er denied a seat beside the fire,
Nor cursed away the widow, stooping low
Beneath the double weight of age and woe.
But times are changed and alter'd is the inn,
For God is wroth, and Britain rife with sin.
The village, happy once, is splendid now !
And at the Turkey reigns, with knotted brow,
Stiff as a mile-stone, set up in his bar,
Vice-regal Constable and Bailiff Marr,
Who nods his "yes," and frowns his fatal "no."
Woe to the scrimp that ventures near him, woe !
He, she, or it—"swag's nifle, skink, or trull,"
Shall find a bed, or Wakefield's gaol is full !

Great man, John Marr! He shoots—or who else
may?

He knows my Lord, is loyal, and can pay.
The poor all hate him, fear him—all save one ;
Broad Jem, the poacher, dreaded is by John.
To draw him drink, objects nor man nor maid ;
The froth is brought, Jem winks, and John is paid ;
For John, who hates all poachers, likes poor Jem,
While Jem, so kind to others, growls at him ;
And when their fierce eyes meet, the tax-made slave
Quakes in his inmost soul, if soul he have,
Thinking of weasand slit by lantern light,
Or slug bang'd through him at the dead of night.
Yet great is he! rich, prudent, tried, and true :
He snores at sermon in his curtain'd pew—
He knows the Steward—he is known afar
To magistrates and bums—great man, John Marr!

XII.

Where yon red villa flares before the wood,
The cottage of my Hannah's father stood ;
That woodbined cottage, girt with orchard trees,
Last left, and earliest found, by birds and bees :
And where the river winds, gnarl'd oaks between,
Squatter'd his drake, and diving ducks were seen ;
While scooting hares oft sought this summit bare,
If lightning glinted through the glooming air.

But where dwells Hannah now? And where is he?—
Gone, like the home of her nativity.
And what vain dame, and what suburban Thane,
The site of Hannah's lovely home profane?
Who dash'd the plum-trees from the blossomy ridge?
From bank to bank, who threw the baby bridge,
Where the huge elm, which twenty bullocks drew,
Plank'd o'er with ash, and rootless, sternly grew,
While plummy ferns wept o'er the waters dark,
Sad for his fall; and, rooted in his bark,
A world of mosses forested the side
Of that fall'n Forest King, to soothe his pride?
What dandy Goth the heaven-made arch displaced,
To show in painted spars his want of taste?
A mortgaged magnate and a sage is he:
His maxims have a deep philosophy.
“Hateful,” he saith, “and vulgar is the flat,
Who deigns to see a poor man touch his hat,
Or serves a beggar, though her curtesy fall,
Or of the rabble does not take the wall.”
Squire Grub is proud—for pride and meanness blamed,
Yet poor as proud, and of his wants ashamed.
Lo! there he struts—the silk-legged King of Cant!
Who thanks the Blessèd powers for crime and want,
Prays to his Demon of Despotic sway
And hymns his God of Carnage! Let him pray!
Yes, pray for strength or weakness, to sustain
The weight of scorn that will crush in his brain,

Ere from the Workhouse, like a ghost, he go
To mate with madmen, in their den of woe,
And tell them that he is not poor—not he ;—
But lord of vast estates—in Chancery !

XIII.

Path of the quiet fields ! that oft of yore
Call'd me at morn, on Shenstone's page to pore :
O poor man's footpath ! where, at evening's close,
He stoop'd, to pluck the woodbine and the rose,
Shaking the dew-drops from the wild-brier bowers,
That stoop'd beneath their load of summer flowers,
Then eyed the west, still bright with fading flame,
As whistling homeward by the wood he came ;
Sweet, dewy, sunny, flowery footpath, thou
Art gone for ever, like the poor man's cow !
No more the wandering townsman's Sabbath smile—
No more the hedger, waiting on the stile
For tardy Jane—no more the muttering bard,
Startling the heifer, near the lone farm-yard—
No more the pious youth, with book in hand,
Spelling the words he fain would understand,
Shall bless thy mazes, when the village bell
Sounds o'er the river, soften'd up the dell :
But from the parlour of the loyal inn,
The Great Unpaid, who cannot err nor sin,

Shall see, well-pleased, the pomp of Lawyer Ridge,
And poor Squire Grub's starved maids, and dandy
bridge,

Where youngling fishers, in the grassy lane,
Purloin'd their tackle from the brood-mare's mane—
And truant urchins, by the river's brink,
Caught the fledged throistle as it stoop'd to drink—
Or with the ramping colt all joyous play'd,
Or scared the owlet in the blue-bell'd shade.

XIV.

Churl Jem ! why dost thou thrust me from the wall ?
I hack no cab, I sham no servant's hall :
Coarse is my coat :—how have I earn'd thy curse ?
Suspectest thou there's money in my purse ?
I said, " Good day, sir," and I touch'd my hat :
Art thou, then, vulgar, as the Sage is flat ?
Alas ! that Sage sees not in thy fierce eyes
Fire-flooded towers, and pride, that shrieks and dies ;
The red-foam'd deluge, and the sea-wide tomb ;
The arm of vengeance, and the brow of doom ;
The grin of millions o'er the shock of all—
A people's wreck, an empire's funeral !



PART II.

THE WANDERER DEPARTED.

I.

Dear Village ! changed—how changed from what
thou wert !

Thy good to bane thy beggar-kings convert.
They say that, discontented with our lot,
We envy wealth, because we have it not ;
That, could we call yon glowing pile our own,
No wight alive would hear our tuneful groan.
They ask why writhes the serpent on our brow ?
When prosper'd England as she prospers now ?
They err. We envy not the pomp we see,
But hate that wealth which makes our poverty.
If talent thrive, and enterprise prevail,
Restore to rustic toil his beef and ale ;
Be few, or many, splendid, as they can,
But let not misery make a fiend of man !

II.

Yes, splendid mansions now these shades adorn,
But wretched children in these huts are born !

There dwell the heirs of unremitting toil,
Who till, but not in hope, a teeming soil,
While Erin's hordes contest with them the plain,
And competition low'rs the price of pain.
What though proud homes their lofty roofs uprear,
If humble homes and comfort disappear?
O baneful splendour ! that but glitters o'er
What may be ruin, and is bliss no more !
As beacons fired on some far mountain's brow,
Shimmer o'er hamlets, black with plague, below,
Where health once glow'd in every fearless face,
And in the motions of all forms was grace—
I look on pomp, that apes a bloated crew,
While beggar'd millions hate the biggen'd few.
Like rocks of ice our fatal wealth is found ;
Not like the sea that spreads those rocks around :
Hark ! o'er their peaks a wild and bird-like wail
Tells of approaching thunder, fire, and hail !
Lo ! at their feet, while cold and bright they sleep,
Mines hunger's fathomless and boundless deep !

III.

Feast of the Village !—yearly held, when June
Sate with the rose, to hear the goldspink's tune,
And lovers, happy as the warbling bird,
Breathed raptures sweeter than the songs they heard,
Stealing through lanes, sun-bright with dewy broom,
By fragrant hedge-rows, sheeted o'er with bloom ;—

Feast of the Happy Village ! where art thou ?
Pshaw ! thou wast vulgar—we are splendid now.
Yet, poor man's pudding !—rich with spicy crumbs,
And tiers of currants, thick as both my thumbs—
Where art thou, festal pudding of our sires ?
Gone, to feed fat the heirs of thieves and liars ;
Gone, to oppress the wrong'd, the true, the brave,
And, wide and deep, dig Poland's second grave ;
Gone, like the harvest pie, a bullock's load,
Four feet across, with crust six inches broad ;
Gone, like poor England's Satrap-swallow'd store ;
Gone, as her trade will go, to come no more !
Well, let it go, and with it the glad hours
That yearly o'er kind hearts shed cottage flowers.
Nor sisters' daughters now, nor sons of sons,
Shall seek the bridge, where still the river runs,
And bless the roof where busy hands prepared
The festal plenty which their fathers shared ;
When, round their grandsire met, his numerous
 race
Beheld their children's children in his face ;
Saw in his eyes the light of suns gone down,
And hoped they saw in his white locks their own.
No more, no more, beneath his smile serene,
The generations shall in joy convene,
All eager to obey the annual call,
And twang the chord of love that bound them all.

IV.

When daisies blush, and windflowers wet with dew ;
When shady lanes with hyacinths are blue ;
When the elm blossoms o'er the brooding bird,
And, wild and wide, the plover's wail is heard
Where melts the mist on mountains far away,
'Till morn is kindled into brightest day ;
No more the shouting youngsters shall convene,
To play at leap-frog on the village-green,
While lasses ripening into love, admire,
And youth's first raptures cheer the gazing sire.
The Green is gone ! and barren splendours gleam,
Where hiss'd the gander at the passing team,
And the gay traveller from the city praised
The poor man's cow, and, weary, stopp'd and gazed.

V.

Where yon broad mansion's tax-built drawing-room
Displays its corniced-gold, dwelt Mary Broom—
Close by the marble hearth her garden smiled—
The widow'd mother of an only child.
I saw her to the house of marriage move,
And weeping o'er the grave of hope and love.
Now, where the woe-worn and the weary rest,
The child is sleeping on its mother's breast.
Not long she mourn'd in duty's lonely shade—
No praise expecting—and she ask'd no aid,

But toil'd and faded silently, and stood
Alike unnoticed by the bad and good,
Dropping meek tears into the sea of days,
Like a pale flower, that, all unseen, displays
Its pensive beauty on a river's brink ;
While overhead the stars rush wild and wink ;
And shadows, cast on earth at night's bright noon,
Move with the clouds, that chase the full-orb'd
moon.

Oh, happy ! with her own proud crust supplied,
In her own bed, a Britoness she died !
In her own shroud her modest state she keeps !
In her own coffin, gloriously, she sleeps !
Not thus the brother of her soul would die ;
O'er him, poor pauper, none will heave a sigh ;
No windflower, emblem of his youth, be laid
To blush for promise in its bloom decay'd ;
Nor, emblem of his age, and hopeless pain,
The dismal daisy of sad autumn's wane :
But Workhouse idiots, and the limping slave,
In four rough boards shall bear him to his grave.

VI.

Where is the Common, once with blessings rich—
The poor man's Common?—like the poor man's flitch
And well-fed ham, which erst his means allow'd,
'Tis gone to bloat the idle and the proud !

To raise high rents ! and lower low profits !—O,
To-morrow of the furies ! thou art slow ;
But where, thou tax-plough'd waste, is now the hind
Who lean'd on his own strength, his heart and mind ?
Where is the matron, with her busy brow ?
Their sheep—where are they ? and their famous cow ?
Their strutting game-cock, with his many queens ?
Their glowing hollyoaks, and winter greens ?
The chubby lad, that cheer'd them with his look,
And shared his breakfast with the home-bred rook ?
The blooming girls, that scour'd the snow-white pail,
Then waked with joy the echoes of the vale,
And, laden homewards, near the sparkling rill,
Cropp'd the first rose that blush'd beneath the hill ?
All vanish'd—with their rights, their hopes, their lands ;
The shoulder-shaking grasp of hearts and hands ;
The good old joke, applauded still as new ;
The wondrous printed tale, which must be true ;
And the stout ale, that show'd the matron's skill,
For, not to be improved, it mended still !
Now, lo ! the young look base, as greybeard guile !
The very children seem afraid to smile,
But not afraid to scowl, with early hate,
At would-be greatness, or the greedy great ;
For they who fling the poor man's worth away,
Root out security, and plant dismay.
Law of the lawless ! hast thou conquer'd Heav'n ?
Then shall the worm that dies not be forgiven.

VII.

But yonder stalks the greatest man alive !
One farmer prospers now, where prosper'd five !
Ah ! where are they?—wives, husbands, children—
where?—

Two died in jail, and one is dying there ;
One broken-hearted, fills a rural grave ;
And one still lives, a pauper and a slave.
Where are their children?—Some, beyond the main,
Convicts for crime ; some, here, in hopeless pain,
Poor wanderers, blue with want ; and some are dead ;
And some, in towns, earn deathily their bread.

All rogues, they died, or fail'd—twas no great harm ;
Why ask who fails, if Jolter gets a farm ?

Full well thrives he—the man is not a fool,
Albeit a tyrant, and his landlord's tool.

He courses ; he affords, and can afford,
To keep his blood, and fox-hunt with my Lord.
He dwells where dwelt the knight, for greyhounds
famed,

Who also with his Satrap coursed and gamed ;
The last of all the little landed Thaness,
Whose acres bound his Lordship's wide domains.

VIII.

Oh, happy, if they knew their bliss, are they
Who, poor themselves, unbounded wealth survey ;

Who nor in ships, nor cabs, nor chariots go,
To view the miracles of art below ;
But, near their homes, behold august abodes,
That like the temples seem of all the gods !
Nor err they, if they sometimes kneel in pray'r
At shrines like those, for God-like powers are
there ;

Powers that on railroads base no treasures waste,
Nor build huge mills, that blush like brick at taste,
Where labour fifteen hours, for twice a groat,
The half-angelic heirs of speech and thought :
But pour profusion from a golden hand,
To deck with Grecian forms a Gothic land.
Hence, yeoman, hence !—thy grandsire's land resign ;
Yield, peasant, to my Lord and power divine !
Thy grange is gone, your cluster'd hovels fall ;
Proud domes expand, the park extends its wall ;
Then kennels rise, the massive Tuscan grows ;
And dogs sublime, like couchant kings, repose !
Lo ! “ still-all-Greek-and-glorious ” Art is here !
Behold the pagod of a British peer !
Admire, ye proud ! and clap your hands, ye poor !
The father of this kingling was a boor !
Not Ispahan, nor Stamboul—though their thrones
Make Satraps out of dead-men's blood and bones,
And play at death, as God-like power will play—
Can match free Britain's ancients of to-day.

IX.

But me nor palaces nor Satraps please ;
I love to look on happy cottages ;
The gems I seek are seen in Virtue's eye ;
These gauds disgust me, and I pass them by.
Show me a home like that I knew of old,
Ere heads grew hot with pride, and bosoms cold ;
Some frank good deeds, which simple truth may
 praise,
Some moral grace, on which the heart may gaze,
Some little hopes that give to toil its zest,
The equal rights that make the labourer blest,
The smile in which eternal love we scan,
And thank his Maker while we look on man.

X.

I dream'd last night of forests and the sea !
My long-lost Hannah ! lives she still for me ?
Is she a matron, loved by him she loves ?
A mother, whom paternal Heav'n approves ?
Perchance a widow ? Nay, I would not wed
The widow of my rival's happier bed.
Nor come I to oppress her with my gaze,
Or bring disgrace upon her latter days.
Forgotten now, perchance, though once too dear,
I yet will sojourn near her—oh, not here !

For thou, sweet Village ! proud in thy decline,
Art too, too splendid for a heart like mine !
In England, then, can no green spot be found
Where men remain whose sympathies are sound ?
There would I dwell ; and, wandering thence, draw
nigh

Her envied home—but not to meet her eye :
Perchance to see her shadow, or again
Hear her soft voice, with sadly-pleasing pain.

XI.

I dream'd I saw her, heard her—but she fled !
In vain I seek her—is she with the dead ?
No meek blue eye, like hers, hath turn'd to me,
And deign'd to know the pilgrim of the sea.
I have not named her—no—I dare not name !
When I would speak, why burns my cheek with
shame ?

I join'd the schoolboys, where the road is wide,
I watch'd the women to the fountain's side,
I read their faces, as the wise read books,
And look'd for Hannah in their wondering looks :
But in no living aspect could I trace
The sweet May-morning of my Hannah's face ;
No, nor its evening, fading into night—
O Sun ! my soul grows weary of thy light !

XII.

I sought the churchyard where the lifeless lie,
And envied them—they rest so peacefully !
“ No wretch comes here, at dead of night,” I said,
“ To drag the weary from his hard-earn’d bed ;
No schoolboys here with mournful relics play,
And kick ‘ the dome of thought ’ o’er common clay ;
No city cur snarls here o’er dead-men’s bones ;
No sordid fiend removes memorial stones :
The dead have here what to the dead belongs,
Though legislation makes not laws, but wrongs.”
I sought a letter’d stone, on which my tears
Had fall’n like thunder-rain, in other years ;
My mother’s grave I sought, in my despair,
But found it not !—Our gravestone was not there !
No, we were fallen men, mere Workhouse slaves—
And how could fallen men have names or graves ?
I thought of sorrow in the wilderness,
And death in solitude, and pitiless
Interment in the tiger’s hideous maw ;
I pray’d ; and, praying, turn’d from all I saw.
My prayers were curses !—But the sexton came :
How my heart yearn’d to name my Hannah’s name !
White was his hair, for full of days was he ;
He walk’d o’er tombstones, like their history.
With well-feign’d carelessness I raised a spade,
Left near a grave, which seem’d but newly made,

And ask'd who slept below? "You knew him well,"
The old man answer'd, "sir, his name was Bell.
He had a sister—she, alas! is gone,
Body and soul, sir! for she married one
Unworthy of her. Many a corpse he took
From this churchyard." And then his head he shook,
And utter'd—whispering low, as if in fear
That the old stones and senseless dead would hear—
A word—a verb, a noun—too widely famed,
Which makes me blush to hear my country named.
That word he utter'd gazing on my face,
As if he loathed my thoughts, then paused a space.
"Sir," he resumed, "a sad death Hannah died;
Her husband kill'd her, or his own son lied.
Vain is your voyage o'er the briny wave,
If here you seek her grave—she had no grave!
The terror-stricken murderer fled before
His crime was known, and ne'er was heard of more.
The poor boy died, sir, uttering fearful cries
In his last dreams, and with his glaring eyes,
And troubled hands, seem'd acting, as it were,
His mother's fate. Yes, sir, *his* grave is there.
But you are ill? Your looks make me afraid—
My God! how frightfully he shakes the spade!"

XIII.

Oh, welcome once again black ocean's foam!
England! can this be England?—this my home?

'This country of the crime without a name,
And men who know nor mercy, hope, nor shame?
O Light ! that cheer'st all life, from sky to sky,
As with a hymn, to which the stars reply !
Canst thou behold this land, O holy light !
And not turn black with horror at the sight?
Fall'n country of my fathers ! fall'n and foul !
Thy body still is here, but where the soul?
I look upon a corpse—'tis putrid clay—
And fiends possess it. Vampires, quit your prey !
Or vainly tremble, when the dead arise,
Clarion'd to vengeance by shriek-shaken skies,
And cranch your hearts, and drink your blood for ale !
Then eat each other, till the banquet fail !
O thou dark tower that look'st o'er ancient woods
To see the tree of fire put forth its buds !
Baronial Keep ! whose ruins, ivy-grown,
The time-touch'd ash mistakes for living stone,
Grasping them with his writhen roots, and fast
Binding the present with the faded past !
While, cropp'd with every crime, the tax-plough'd moor,
And footpaths stolen from the trampled poor,
And commons, sown with curses loud and deep,
Proclaim a harvest, which the rich shall reap—
Call up the iron men of Runnymede,
And bid them look on lords, whom peasants feed !
Then—when the worm slinks down at nature's groan.
And with the shrieking heav'ns thy dungeons moan—

O'er the loud fall of greatness, misery fed,
Let their fierce laugh awake their vassals dead,
The shaft-famed men, whom yet tradition sings,
Who served, but did not feed, the fear'd of kings,
To join the wondering laugh, and wilder yell,
While England flames—"a garden" and a hell.

XIV.

Again upon the deep I toss and swing !
The bounding billow lifts me, like the wing
Of the struck eagle—and away I dart,
Bearing afar the arrow in my heart.
For thou art with me, though I see no more
Thee, stream-loved England ! Thy impatient shore
Hath sunk beneath me—miles, a thousand miles ;
Yet, in my heart, thy verdant Eden smiles.
Land where my Hannah died, and hath no tomb !
Still in my soul thy dewy roses bloom.
E'en in Niagara's roar, remembrance still
Shall hear thy throstle, o'er the lucid rill,
At lucid eve—thy bee, at stillest noon ;
And, when clouds chase the heart-awaking moon,
The mocking-bird, where Erie's waters swell,
Shall sing of fountain'd vales and philomel ;
To my sick soul bring over worlds of waves,
Dew-glistening Albion's woods, and dripping caves ;
But—with her linnet, redbreast, lark, and wren—
Her blasted homes and much-enduring men !

THEY MET IN HEAVEN.

1.

THROUGH realms of ice my journey lay, beneath
 The wafture of two pinions black and vast,
 That shook o'er boundless snows the dust of death,
 While overhead, thick starless Midnight cast
 Gloom on sad forms, that ever onward pass'd.
 But whither pass'd they? O Eternity,
 Thou answerest not! Yet still thy sable wings—
 Silently, silently, how silently!—
 Are sweeping worlds away, with all their Kings.
 And still I wander'd with forgotten things,
 In pilgrimage with Death, an age-long day,
 A year of anxious ages—so methought—
 Till rose a living world in morning grey,
 And light seem'd born of darkness—light which
 brought
 Before my soul the coasts of land remote.
 “Hail, holy light, offspring of Heav'n, first-born,
 Or of the eternal, coeternal beam!”
 Through worlds of darkness led, and travel-worn,

Again I felt thy glowing, brightening gleam ;
Again I greeted thine "ethereal stream,"
And bless'd the fountain whence thy glories flow.

II.

I waked not then, methought, but wander'd slow,
Where dwell the great, whom death hath freed from
pain.
Trembling, I gazed on Hampden's thoughtful brow,
While Strafford smiled upon me in disdain,
And turn'd away from Hutchison and Vane.
There some whom criminals disdain'd ; and all
Who, battling for the right, had nobly died ;
And some whom justest men deem'd criminal,
Wond'ring, I saw—the flatter'd, the belied !
And Muir and Saville, walking side by side !
They wept—e'en Strafford melted, when I told
Of Britain's woes—of toil that earn'd not bread,
And hands that found not work ; but Fairfax scowl'd,
While Cromwell laugh'd, and Russell's cheek grew
red,
When, pale, I spake of Satraps bread-tax-fed.
Lo ! as I ceased, from earth a Stranger came,
With hurried step—a presence heavenly fair !
Yet grief, and anger, pride, contempt, and shame
Were strangely mingled in his troubled stare !
And thus he spoke, with timid haughty air,

To Russell, Fairfax, in tones low but sweet :—

“I, too, am noble. England’s magnates rank
Me with themselves ; and when, beneath their feet
Fate’s low-born despot, hope-deserted, sank ;
When torrid noon his sweat of horror drank,
I join’d his name for ever with my own !”

III.

Him then to answer, one who sate alone,
Like a main’d lion, mateless in his lair,
Rose from his savage couch of barren stone.
His kingly features wither’d by despair,
And heart-worn till the tortured nerve was bare :

With looks that seem’d to scorn e’en scorn of less

Than demigods, the Army-Scatterer came—

An awful shadow of the mightiness

That once was his ; the gloom, but not the flame
Of waning storms, when winds and seas grow
tame.

The stranger, shrinking from the warrior’s eye,
On his own hands his beauteous visage bow’d,
Sobbing ; but soon he raised it mournfully,
And met th’ accusing look, and on the crowd
Smiled, while the stern accuser spake aloud.

IV.

“ Yet, Lordling,* though ‘but yesterday a King,
Throneless, I died,’ yet nations sobb’d my knell !
And still I live, and reign, *no* nameless thing !
I fell, ’tis true—I failed ; and thou canst tell
That any wretch alive may say I fell,
Of worth convicted, and the glorious sin
That wreck’d the angels, now I owe and pay,
To wealth and power’s pretended Jacobin,
Scorn for thy glory, laughter for the lay
That won the flatteries of an abject day.
When Meanness taught her helots to be proud,
Because the breaker of their bonds was gone,
Didst thou too join, magnanimous and loud,
The yell of millions o’er the prostrate one ?
What cat out-mew’d the Cat of Helicon ?
Yes, thou didst soothe my sorrows with an ode,
When stunn’d I lay beneath Destruction’s wing,
And realms embattled o’er their conqueror rode.
Yes, when a world combined with fate to fling
A cruel sunshine on each vulgar King ;
When fall’n, deserted, blasted, and alone,
Silent he press’d his bed of burning stone,

* If it be objected to these lines that the great bard is dead, so, I answer, is also the great warrior ; and he who has honest and useful thoughts to express of either, or both of them, should do his duty Briton-like.

What caitiff aim'd at his sublime despair,
Th' immortal shaft that pierced Prometheus there?
Cat, and not vulture ! couldst not thou refrain,
The laureate vile of viler things to be?
When 'Timour's Captive's' cage was rock and main,
What was 'proud Austria's mournful flower' to thee,
Thou soulless torturer of Captivity?
And what to thee, mean Homager of Thrones,
The sleepless pang that stung him till he died?
Tortured, he perish'd—but who heard his groans?
Chain'd through the soul, the 'throneless homicide'
Mantled his agony in stoic pride.
While souls guilt-clotted watch'd, with others' eyes,
And from afar, with others' feet repair'd
To count and weigh, and quaff his agonies—
Like Phidian marble he endured, and dared
The Universe to shake what Fate had spared.
How fare the lands he loved, and fought to save?
O Hun and Goth ! your new-born hope is gone !
Thou, Italy, art Glory's spacious grave,
Through which the stream of my renown flows on—
Like thine Euphrates, ruin'd Babylon !
What gain'd my gaolers by my wrongs and fall?
Laws praised in hell—not Draco's laws, but worse ;
A mournful page, which history writes in gall ;
A table without food—an empty purse ;
A name, become a by-word and a curse,
O'er every sea, to warn all nations, borne !”

V.

Was it the brightening gleam of heavenly morn,
 Beneath the shadow of his godlike brow?
Or, did a tear of grief, and rage, and scorn,
 Down his sad cheek of pride and trouble flow?
He felt upon his cheek th' indignant glow,
But shed no tear, not e'en a burning tear.
 The fire of sorrow in his bosom pent,
He gazed on Milton, with an eye severe,
 On tranquil Pym a look of sternness bent,
 Then, smiling on the humbled stranger, went
To laugh with Cæsar tasking Hannibal.



WHAT ART THOU, MIND ?



To that true Christian and Patriot, the Reverend HENRY WRIGHT-
SON, this Poem is dedicated by the Author.

GRIEF, sages tell us, hath a drooping wing,
And loves to perch upon the shaken mind,
To which she sings notes like the muttering
Of wintry rivers in the wintry wind,
Till health flies wing'd away and leaves behind
Shadows, illusions, dreams, and worse than dreams.
But Alfred dreams not—he is wide awake !
Light is around him, and the chime of streams ;
Bees hum o'er sallows yet ; and in the brake,
Coil'd like a chain of amethyst, the snake
Basks on the bank, above the streamlet's flow.
Oh, there are beauteous plumes, and many a bill,
And life, and love, beneath the ivy's bough !
The swallow dips his purple in the rill,
The lark sings in the cloud, and from the hill
The blackbird's song replies. But Alfred's ear,
Nor splashing swallow hears, nor humming bee,
Nor warbling lark, nor ivy shaken near
By brooding thrush, nor breeze-born melody
Of chiming streams. He listens mournfully

To accents which the earth shall hear no more !
What art thou, Mind, that mirror'st things unseen,
Giv'st to the dead the smiles which erst they wore,
And lift'st the veil which fate hath cast between
Thee and the forms which are not, but have been ?
What art thou, conscious power, that hear'st the mute,
And feel'st th' impalpable ? Thy magic brings
Back to our hearts the warblings of the lute,
Which long had slept with unexisting things !
And shall we stand, doubting immortal wings,
In presence of the angels ? Ask the worm,
And she will bid thee doubt ; yet she is meek,
And wise—for when earth shakes, she shuns thy form,
But never saw the morning on thy cheek,
The blue heav'n in thine eye, the lightning break
In laughter from thy lips. So she denies
That colours are, even while the fragrant thorn
Blossoms above her ! Weight, and shape, and size,
She says, are real ; but she laughs to scorn
The gorgeous rainbow, and the blushing morn,
And can disprove the glory of the rose !—
Yet doth she err ; our limbless sister errs ;
For on thy cheek, O Man ! the morning glows,
And fair is heaven's bright bow. The wayside furze
Discredits her ; the humblest weed that stirs
Its small green leaves, can undemonstrate all
Her proofs triumphant, that celestial light
Shines not at noon. But though the sunflower tall,

And tiniest moss are clad in liveries bright,
Never, to her, can'st thou disprove the night,
The starless night, in which she hath her home !
Then, marvel not, if death-bless'd spirits free
Wander, at times, beneath this heavenly dome,
On wings too bright for mortal eyes to see ;
While, unperceived by them, as both by thee,
Forms, more seraphic still, around us fly,
And stoop to them and thee, with looks of love ;
Or vainly strain the archangelic eye,
To gaze on holier forms above, above,
That round the throne of heaven's Almighty move.
O look on Alfred !—look ! the man is blind !
She whom he loved sleeps in her winding-sheet,
Yet he beholds her with the eyes of mind !
He sees the form which he no more shall meet,
But cannot see the primrose at his feet !
They mingle tears with tears, and sighs with sighs,
And sobs with sobs, but words, long time, have none ;
She looks her soul into his sightless eyes,
And, like a passionate thought, is come and gone,
While at his feet, unheard, the bright rill babbles on !



STEAM AT SHEFFIELD.



TO CHARLES HINDLEY, Esq., M.P., one of our creators of national wealth—who, while they enrich themselves, silently reproach the splendid drones of society, by increasing the productive capital of the State—I inscribe this humble Poem, wishing it were worthier.

I.

WELL, gaze thou on the hills, and hedge-side flowers !
 But blind old Andrew will with me repair
 To yonder massive pile, where useful powers,
 Toiling unconsciously, aloud declare
 That man, too, and his works, are grand and fair.
 Son of the far-famed self-taught engineer,
 Whose deeds were marvels in the bygone days !
 Ill it becomes thee, with ungrateful sneer,
 The trade-fed town and townsmen to dispraise.
 Why rail at Traffic's wheels, and crowded ways ?
 Trade makes thee rich ; then, William, murmur not
 Though Trade's black vapours ever round thee rise.
 Trade makes thee sage ; lo ! thou read'st Locke and
 Scott !
 While the poor rustic, beast-like, lives and dies,
 Blind to the page of priceless mysteries !

“Fair is the bow that spans the shower,” thou
say’st,

“But all unlovely, as an eyeless skull,
Is man’s black workshop in the streeted waste.”
And can the city’s smoke be worse than dull,
If Martin found it more than beautiful?
Did he, did Martin steal immortal hues
From London’s cloud, or Carron’s gloomy glare—
Light-darken’d shadows, such as Milton’s muse
Cast o’er th’ Eternal—and shalt thou despair
To find, where man is found, the grand and fair?
Can’st thou love Nature, and not love the sound
Of cheerful labour? He who loathes the crew
To whose hard hands the toiling oar is bound,
Is dark of spirit, bilious as his hue,
And bread-tax-dyed in Tory lust’s true blue.

“Thou lov’st the woods, the rocks, the quiet
fields!”

But tell me, if thou can’st, enthusiast wan!
Why the broad town to thee no gladness yields?
If thou lov’st Nature sympathize with man;
For he and his are parts of Nature’s plan.
But can’st thou love her if she love not thee?
She will be wholly loved, or not at all.
Thou lov’st her streams, her flowers; thou lov’st
to see

The gorgeous halcyon strike the bulrush tall
Thou lov’st to feel the veil of evening fall,

Like gentlest slumber, on a happy bride ;
For these are Nature's ! Art not thou hers too ?
A portion of her pageantry and pride ;
In all thy passions, all thou seek'st to do,
And all thou dost ? The earth-worm is allied
To God, and will not have her claims denied,
Though thou disown her fellow-worm, and scorn
The lowly beauty of his toil and care.
" Sweet is the whisper of the breezy morn
To waking streams." And hath the useful share
No splendour ? Doth the tilter's cottage wear
No smiles for thee ? " How beauteous are the dyes
That grove and hedgerow from their plumage shake !"
And cannot the loud hammer, which supplies
Food for the blacksmith's rosy children, make
Sweet music to thy heart ? " Behold the snake
Couch'd on its bed of beams." The scaly worm
Is lovely, coil'd above the river's flow ;
But there is nobler beauty in the form
That welds the hissing steel, with ponderous blow ;
Yea, there is majesty on that calm brow,
And in those eyes the light of thoughts divine !

II.

Come, blind old Andrew Turner ! link in mine
Thy time-tried arm, and cross the town with me ;
For there are wonders mightier far than thine ;

Watt ! and his million-feeding enginery !
Steam-miracles of demi-deity !
Thou can'st not see, unnumber'd chimneys o'er,
From chimneys tall the smoky cloud aspire ;
But thou can'st hear the unwearied crash and roar
Of iron powers, that, urged by restless fire,
Toil ceaseless, day and night, yet never tire,
Or say to greedy man, " 'Thou dost amiss."

III.

Oh, there is glorious harmony in this
Tempestuous music of the giant, Steam,
Commingling growl, and roar, and stamp, and hiss,
With flame and darkness ! Like a Cyclop's dream,
It stuns our wondering souls, that start and scream
With joy and terror ; while, like gold on snow
Is morning's beam on Andrew's hoary hair !
Like gold on pearl is morning on his brow !
His hat is in his hand, his head is bare ;
And, rolling wide his sightless eyes, he stands
Before this metal god, that yet shall chase
The tyrant idols of remotest lands,
Preach science to the desert, and efface
The barren curse from every pathless place
Where virtues have not yet atoned for crimes.
He loves the thunder of machinery !
It is beneficent thunder, though, at times,

Like heaven's red bolt, it lightens fatally.
Poor blind old man ! what would he give to see
This bloodless Waterloo ! this hell of wheels ;
This dreadful speed, that seems to sleep and snore,
And dream of earthquake ! In his brain he feels
The mighty arm of mist, that shakes the shore
Along the throng'd canal, in ceaseless roar
Urging the heavy forge, the clanking mill,
The rapid tilt, and screaming, sparkling stone.
Is this the spot where stoop'd the ash-crown'd
hill

To meet the vale, when bee-loved banks, o'ergrown
With broom and woodbine, heard the cushat lone
Coo for her absent love ?—Oh, ne'er again
Will Andrew pluck the freckled foxglove here !
How like a monster, with a league-long mane,
Or Titan's rocket, in its high career,
Towers the dense smoke ! The falcon, wheeling
near,
Turns, and the angry crow seeks purer skies.

IV.

At first, with lifted hands in mute surprise,
Old Andrew listens to the mingled sound
Of hammer, roll, and wheel. His sightless eyes
Brighten with generous pride, that man hath found
Redemption from the manacles which bound

His powers for many an age. A poor man's boy
Constructed these grand works ! Lo ! like the sun,
Shines knowledge now on all ! He thinks with joy
Of that futurity which is begun—
Of that great victory which shall be won
By Truth o'er Falsehood ; and already feels
Earth shaken by the conflict. But a low
Deep sigh escapes him ; sadness o'er him steals,
Shading his noble heart with selfish woe ;
Yes, Envy clouds his melancholy brow.
What ! shall the good old times, in aught of good,
Yield to the days of cant and parish pay,
The sister-growth of twenty years of blood ?
His ancient fame, he feels, is past away ;
He is no more the wonder of his day—
The far-praised, self-taught, matchless engineer !

v.

But he is still the man who planted here
The first steam-engine seen in all the shire—
Laugh'd at by many an Eldon far and near—
While sundry sage Newcastles, in their ire,
Swore that a roasting in his boiler fire
Would best reward the maker. Round his form
The spirit of the Moors wrapp'd fold on fold
Of thund'rous gloom, and flash'd th' indignant storm
From his dilating eyes, when first uproll'd
The volumed smoke, that, like a prophet, told

Of horrors yet to come. His angry scowl
Cast night at noon o'er Rivelin and Don,
And scared o'er Loxley's springs the screaming fowl ;
For rill and river listen'd, every one,
When the old Tory put his darkness on.
Full soon his deep and hollow voice forth brake,
Cursing the tilting, tipling, strange machine ;
And then the lightning of his laughter spake,
Calling the thing a " Whimsy."* To this day
A " Whimsy " it is call'd, wherever seen ;
And strangers, travelling by the mail, may see
The coal-devouring monster, as he rides,
And wonder what the uncouth beast may be
That canters, like a horse with wooden sides,
And lifts his food from depths where night presides,
With winking taper, o'er the in-back'd slave,
Who, laid face upward, hews the black stone down.†
Poor living corpse ! he labours in the grave ;
Poor two-legg'd mole ! he mines for half-a-crown
From morn to eve — that wolves, who sleep on
down,
And pare our bones, may eat their bread-tax warm !

* When the steam-engine (not Watt's) was first employed in drawing coals from mines, it was nick-named a " Whimsy," by the admirers of the wisdom of our ancestors ; and to this day, that description of steam-engine is called a " Whimsy," in the coal districts.

† The colliers are all weasel-backed, in consequence of the position in which they work.

VI.

But could poor Andrew's "Whimsy" boast an arm,
A back like these? Upstart of Yesterday!
Thou doubler of the rent of every farm,
From John o' Groat's to Cornwall's farthest bay!
Engine of Watt! unrivall'd is thy sway.
Compared with thine, what is the tyrant's power?
His might destroys, while thine creates and saves.
Thy triumphs live and grow, like fruit and flower;
But his are writ in blood, and read on graves!
Let him yoke all his regimented slaves,
And bid them strive to wield thy tireless fly,
As thou canst wield it. Soon his baffled bands
Would yield to thee, despite his wrathful eye.
Lo! unto thee both Indies lift their hands!
Thy vapoury pulse is felt on farthest strands!
Thou tirest not, complainest not—though blind
As human pride (earth's lowest dust) art thou.
Child of pale thought! dread masterpiece of mind!
I read nor thought nor passion on thy brow!
To-morrow thou wilt labour, deaf as now!
And must we say "that soul is wanting here?"

VII.

No; there he moves, the thoughtful engineer,
The soul of all this motion; rule in hand,
And coarsely apron'd—simple, plain, sincere—

An honest man ; self-taught to understand
The useful wonders which he built and plann'd.
Self-taught to read and write—a poor man's son,
Though poor no more—how would he sit alone,
When the hard labour of the day was done,
Bent o'er his table, silent as a stone,
To make the wisdom of the wise his own !
How oft of Brindley's deeds th' apprenticed boy
Would speak delighted, long ere freedom came !
'And talk of Watt ! while, shedding tears of joy,
His widow'd mother heard, and hoped the name
Of her poor boy, like theirs, would rise to fame.
Was not her love prophetic ? Is he famed ?
Yea ; for deep foresight, and improving skill,
And patience, which might make the proud ashamed.
Built by himself, lo ! yonder, from the hill
His dwelling peeps !—and she is with him still ;
Happy to live, and well prepared to die !

VIII.

How unlike him is Grip, the upstart sly,
Who on the dunghill, whence he lately rose,
Lost his large organ of identity,
And left his siré to starve ! Alas, he knows
No poor man now ! But every day he goes
To visit his nine acres, pitiless
Of him who tills the road, that shoeless boor
Who feeds his brother exile in distress.

Hark ! muttering oaths, he wonders why our poor
Are not all Irish ! Eyeing, then, the moor,
He swears, if he were king, what he would do !
Our corn-importing rogues should have a fall ;
For he would plough the rocks, and trench them too.
And then of bloody papists doth he bawl ;
If he were king, he'd (damn them !) shoot them all.
And then he quotes the Duke ! and sagely thinks
That princes should be loyal to the throne.
And then he talks of privilege—and winks :
Game he can't eat, he hints ; but kills his own.
And then he calls the land a marrow bone,
Which tradesmen suck ; for he no longer trades,
But talks of traffic with defensive sneer.
Full deeply is he learn'd in modes and grades,
And condescends to think my Lord his peer !
Yet, lo ! he noddeth at the engineer—
Grins at the “ fellow ”—grunts—and lounges on !



THE RANTER.



To JOHN BOWRING, Esq., one of our steadiest Champions of Liberty, Civil and Religious—whose Translations have enabled us to shake hands with Brethren whom we knew not; the Living, who to us were dead; and the Dead, who cannot die—this Poem is dedicated, by his obliged and thankful Friend, the Author.

I.

MILES GORDON sleeps; his six days' labour done,
 He dreams of Sunday, verdant fields, and prayer:
 O rise, bless'd morn, unclouded! Let thy sun
 Shine on the artisan—thy purest air
 Breathe on the bread-tax'd labourer's deep despair!
 Poor sons of toil! I grudge them not the breeze
 That plays with Sabbath flowers, the clouds that play
 With Sabbath winds, the hum of Sabbath bees,
 The Sabbath walk, the skylark's Sabbath lay,
 The silent sunshine of the Sabbath day.

II.

The stars wax pale, the moon is cold and dim;
 Miles Gordon wakes, and grey dawn tints the skies:
 The many-childed widow, who to him

Is as a mother, hears her lodger rise,
And listens to his prayer with swimming eyes.
For her and for her orphans poor he prays,
For all who earn the bread they daily eat :—
“ Bless them, O God, with useful, happy days,
With hearts that scorn all meanness and deceit ;
And round their lowly hearths let freemen meet ! ”—
This morn, betimes, she hastes to leave her bed,
For he must preach beneath th’ autumnal tree :
She lights her fire, and soon the board is spread
With Sabbath coffee, toast, and cups for three.
Pale he descends ; again she starts to see
His hollow cheek, and feels they soon must part !
But they shall meet again—that hope is sure ;
And, oh ! she venerates his mind and heart,
For he is pure, if mortal e’er was pure !
His words, his silence, teach her to endure !
And then he helps to feed her orphan’d five !
O God ! thy judgments cruel seem to be !
While bad men biggen long, and cursing thrive,
The good, like wintry sunbeams, fade and flee—
That we may follow *them*, and come to thee.

III.

In haste she turns, and climbs the narrow stair,
To wake her eldest born, but, pausing, stands
Bent o’er his bed ; for on his forehead bare,

Like jewels ring'd on sleeping beauty's hands,
Tired labour's gems are set in beaded bands ;
And none, none, none, like bread-tax'd labour
know'th

How more than grateful are his slumbers brief.
Thou dost not know, thou pamper'd son of sloth !
Thou canst not tell, thou bread-tax-eating thief !
How sweet is rest to bread-tax'd toil and grief.
Like sculpture, or like death, serene he lies.
But, no, that tear is not a marble tear !
He names, in sleep, his father's injuries ;
And now, in silence, wears a smile severe.
How like his sire he looks, when drawing near
His journey's close, and that fair form bent o'er
His darkening cheek, still faintly tinged with red,
And fondly gazed—too soon to gaze no more !—
While her long tresses, o'er the seeming dead,
Stream'd in their black profusion, from the head
Of matron loveliness—more touchingly,
More sadly beautiful, and pale, and still—
A shape of half-divine humanity,
Worthy of Chantrey's steel, or Milton's quill,
Or heaven-taught Raphael's soul-expressing skill !
And must she wake that poor o'er-labour'd youth ?
Oh, yes, or Edmund will his mother chide ;
For he, this morn, would hear the words of truth
From lips inspired, on Shirecliffe's lofty side,
Gazing o'er tree and tower on Hallam wide.

Up, sluggards, up ! the mountains one by one,
Ascend in light ; and slow the mists retire
From vale and plain. The cloud on Stannington
Beholds a rocket—No, 'tis Morthen spire !
The sun is risen ! cries Stanedge, tipp'd with fire ;
On Norwood's flowers the dew-drops shine and
shake ;

Up, sluggards, up ! and drink the morning breeze.
The birds on cloud-left Osgathorpe awake ;
And Wincobank is waving all his trees
O'er subject towns, and farms, and villages,
And gleaming streams, and wood, and waterfalls.
Up ! climb the oak-crown'd summit ! Hooper Stand
And Keppel's Pillar gaze on Wentworth's halls,
And misty lakes, that brighten and expand,
And distant hills, that watch the western strand.
Up ! trace God's foot-prints, where they paint the
mould

With heavenly green, and hues that blush and
glow

Like angel's wings ; while skies of blue and gold
Stoop to Miles Gordon on the mountain's brow.
Behold the Great Unpaid ! the prophet, lo !
Sublime he stands beneath the Gospel tree,
And Edmund stands on Shirecliffe at his side ;
Behind him, sinks, and swells, and spreads a sea
Of hills, and vales, and groves ; before him glide
Don, Rivelin, Loxley, wandering in their pride

From heights that mix their azure with the cloud ;
Beneath him, spire and dome are glittering ;
And round him press his flock, a woe-worn crowd.
To other words, while forest echoes ring,
“ Ye banks and braes o’ bonny Doon,” they sing ;
And, far below, the drover, with a start
Awaking, listens to the well-known strain,
Which brings Shihallian’s shadow to his heart,
And Scotia’s loneliest vales ; then sleeps again,
And dreams, on Loxley’s banks, of Dunsinane.
The hymn they sing is to their preacher dear ;
It breathes of hopes and glories grand and vast,
While on his face they look, with grief and fear ;
Full well they know his sands are ebbing fast ;
But, hark ! he speaks, and feels he speaks his last !—

IV.

“ ‘ Woe be unto you, scribes and pharisees,
Who eat the widow’s and the orphan’s bread,
And make long prayers to hide your villanies,’
Said He who had not where to lay his head ;
And wandering forth, while blew the Sabbath breeze.
Pluck’d ears of corn, with humble men, like these.
God blames not him who toils six days in seven,
Where smoke and dust bedim the golden day,
If he delight, beneath the dome of heaven,
To hear the winds, and see the clouds at play,
Or climb his hills, amid their flowers to pray.

Ask ye if I, of Wesley's followers one,
Abjure the house where Wesleyans bend the knee?
I do—because the *spirit* thence is gone;
And truth, and faith, and grace, are not, with me,
The Hundred Popes of England's Jesuitry.
We hate not the religion of bare walls;
We scorn not the *cathedral'd* pomp of prayer;
For sweet are all our Father's festivals,
If contrite hearts the heavenly banquet share,
In field or temple: God is everywhere!
But we hate arrogance and selfishness,
Come where they may, and most beneath the roof
Sacred to public worship. We profess
No love for him who feels no self-reproof
When in God's house he stands from God aloof;
Nor worship we grim Mars the homicide:
Our prayers are not for slaughter; we behold
With scorn sectarian and prelatic pride—
Slaves, if not bought, too willing to be sold;
Christians misnamed, whose gods are blood and gold.
What are the *deeds* of men called Christian, now?
They roll themselves in dust before the great;
Wherever Mammon builds a shrine, they bow,
And would nail Jesus to their cross of hate,
Should He again appear in *mean* estate.
Pleasant, repaid by splendid beauty's smile,
Praised by the proud, to flatter power and pride
And prate of independence all the while;

Pleasant and safe, down sunny streams to glide ;
But virtue fronts the blast, and breasts the tide.
Where are their 'protests,' monthly, weekly made.
Against Abaddon's Corn-Law, and his sword ?
Where their petitions for unfetter'd trade ?
Where their recorded execrations pour'd
On blood-stain'd tyrants, and the servile horde ?
When earth wept blood, that wolves might lap and
swill,
And pleading mercy was a trampled worm,
Basely they pander'd to the slayer's will ;
And still their spells they mutter in the storm,
Retarding long the march of slow reform.
When palaced paupers, sneering, beard the town,
They preach the bread-tax in a text like this,
No text more plain—' To Cæsar give his own ! '
Ah, Serviles, dev'lishly the mark they miss,
And give to Cæsar *ours*, not theirs nor his.
What said the blushing saints, when Britain's name
Brought blushes to all else, o'er every sea,
And Lowe, Reade, Bathurst, names of deathless fame,
Engraved on hers their immortality ?
Oh, we were great, magnanimous, and free,
And pillage-purchased—yet unsold, unbought ;
Bread-tax'd, and Peterloo'd, and parish paid,
And Cadi-Dervised—therefore most devout ;
Unplunder'd, undegraded, unbetray'd,
And Sidmouth'd, Oliver'd, and Castlereagh'd !—

Pious they are, cool, circumspect, severe ;
And while they feel for woes beyond the wave,
They laud the tyrants who starve millions here :
The famish'd Briton *must* be fool or knave,
But wrongs are precious in a foreign slave.
Their Bibles for the heathen load our fleets ;
Lo ! gloating eastward, they inquire, ' What news ? '
' We die,' we answer, ' foodless, in the streets,'
And what reply your men of Gospel-views ?
Oh, ' they are sending bacon to the Jews ! '
Their lofty souls have telescopic eyes,
Which see the smallest speck of distant pain,
While, at their feet, a world of agonies,
Unseen, unheard, unheeded, writhes in vain.
Yet thou, O God ! withhold'st thy sulphurous rain !
Or, if it fall, it blasts the labour'd vale,
And spares the barren summit ! Lord ! how long !
Shall freedom's struggles turn the good man pale,
And, like a vile apology for wrong,
Add to the torturing scourge another thong ?
O for a Saint, like those who sought and found,
For conscience' sake, sad homes beyond the main !
The Fathers of New England, who unbound,
In wild Columbia, Europe's double chain ;
The men whose dust cries, ' Sparta, live again ! '
The slander'd Calvinists of Charles's time
Fought (and they won it) Freedom's holy fight.
Like prophet-bards, although they hated rhyme,

All incorruptible as heaven's own light,
Spoke each devoted preacher for the right.
No servile doctrines, such as power approves,
They to the poor and broken-hearted taught ;
With truths that tyrants dread, and conscience loves,
They wing'd and barb'd the arrows of their thought ;
Sin in high places was the mark they sought ;
They said not, ' Man be circumspect and thrive !
Be mean, base, slavish, bloody—and prevail !'
Nor doth the Deity they worshipp'd drive
His four-in-hand, applaud a smutty tale,
Send Members to the House, and us to gaol.
With zeal they preach'd, with reverence they were
heard ;

For in their daring creed, sublime, sincere,
Danger was found, that parson-hated word !
They flatter'd none—they knew nor hate nor fear,
But taught the will of God—and *did it* here.
Even as the fire-wing'd thunder rends the cloud,
Their spoken lightnings, dazzling all the land,
Abash'd the foreheads of the great and proud,
Still'd faction's roar, as by a god's command,
And meeken'd Cromwell of the iron hand.

v.

“ Now look beneath, where tax-bought horses draw
The Cadi *amateur*—a devotee
For drum-head justice famed, and parlour law !

Hater evangelized of liberty !
How worthy him who died on Calvary,
'The Great Reformer, Christ ! Who does not loathe
His loathsome loathing of all liberal taint !
Which of you hath not toil'd to feed and clothe
His lackeys ? O for Hogarth's hand, to paint
His mental lineaments of beast and saint,
His Corn-Law scowl, and landed length of ears !
Dost thou, thus early, mighty Lord, repair
To yonder fane ? 'Tis well. Go, and in tears
Kneel, holy wretch, although the Sabbath air,
Is weary of thy long unpunish'd prayer.
Thou, who with hellish zeal, wast drunk and blind
When tyrants, cloven-hoof'd in heart and brain,
Made murder pastime, and the tardy wind
Bore fresh glad tidings o'er the groaning main
Of hecatombs on Moloch's altar slain !
Kneel, Saint of Carnage !—kneel, but not to Baal ;
Kneel, but alone, with none to laud thy zeal ;
For the hour cometh when the reed shall fail
On which the wicked lean. But wherefore kneel ?
Can the worn stone repent, and weep, and feel ?
Still harder granite forms the bosom-core
Of him who laugh'd when freedom's thousands
fell.

Hark, 'tis the voice, that erst of battle's roar
Was wont too oft from yonder tower to tell,
Pealing, at thy command, o'er crash and yell,

And fiend-like faces, reddening in the light
Of streets, that crimson'd midnight with their glare,
When England hired the hell-hounds of the fight,
Because men broke, in their sublime despair,
The bonds which nature could no longer bear !
Hark, 'tis the *iron* voice ! and still to thee
It speaks of death. Perchance, some child of clay,
Some woe-worn thrall of long iniquity,
Some drudge, whose mate can yet afford to pay
For decent pray'rs, treading the gloomy way
Which all must tread, is gone to her long rest,
And last account—a dread one *thine* will be !
Of means atrocious, used for ends unblest'd !
And joy—for what ? For guilty victory ;
States bought and sold by fraud to tyranny ;
Slaves arm'd to kill ; the free by slaves enslaved ;
Red havoc's carnival from shore to shore ;
Sons slaughter'd, widows childless, realms depraved ;
And Britain's treasures pour'd in seas of gore,
Till lords ask alms, and fiercely growl for more !
Yes, when your country is one vast disease,
And failing fortunes sadden every door—
These, O ye quacks ! these are your remedies ;
Alms for the rich !—a bread-tax for the poor !
Soul-purchased harvest on the indignant moor !
Thus the wing'd victor of a hundred fights,
The warrior ship, bows low her banner'd head,
When through her planks the sea-born reptile bites

Its deadly way—and sinks in ocean's bed,
Vanquish'd by worms. 'What then? The worms
were fed.'

Will not God smite thee black, thou whited wall?
Thy life is lawless, and thy law a lie,
Or nature is a dream unnatural.
Look on the clouds, the streams, the earth, the sky :
Lo, all is interchange and harmony !
Where is the gorgeous pomp which, yester morn,
Curtain'd yon orb with amber, fold on fold ?
Behold it in the blue of Rivelin, borne
To feed the all-feeding seas ! the molten gold
Is flowing pale in Loxley's crystal cold,
To kindle into beauty tree and flower,
And wake to verdant life hill, vale, and plain.
Cloud trades with rivers, and exchange is power :
But should the clouds, the streams, the winds disdain
Harmonious intercourse, nor dew nor rain
Would forest-crown the mountains ; airless day
Would blast, on Kinderscout, the heathy glow ;
No purply green would meeken into grey,
O'er Don at eve ; no sound of river's flow
Disturb the sepulchre of all below.

VI.

“ O for a ship—a ship !—the wing of steam !
To bear us from the land where toil, despised,
Is robb'd and scourged, and life's best prospects seem

Sad as the couch of patience agonized !
Is there no land where useful men are prized
By those they feed ? Or will there never be
For hope a refuge and a dwelling-place,
Where tyrants, in their mad rapacity,
Shake not their clench'd fists in the Almighty's face,
And cry—' Thou fool ! '—Shall glorious seas embrace
A thousand shores in vain ? Shall paupers grow
Where he hath said the eagle's young shall feed ?
Shall hopeless tears to water deserts flow,
While flow his mighty streams, with none to heed,
And make fertility a baneful weed ?
Poor bread-tax'd slaves, have ye no hope on earth ?
Yes, God from evil still educes good ;
Sublime events are rushing to their birth ;
Lo, tyrants by their victims are withstood !
And Freedom's seed still grows, though steep'd in
blood !

When by our Father's voice the skies are riven,
That, like the winnow'd chaff, disease may fly ;
And seas are shaken by the breath of heaven,
Lest in their depths the living spirit die ;
Man views the scene with awed but grateful eye,
And trembling feels, could God abuse his power,
Nor man, nor nature, would endure an hour.
But there is mercy in his seeming wrath ;
It smites to save—not, tyrant-like, to slay ;
And storms have beauty, as the lily hath :

Grand are the clouds that, mirror'd on the bay,
Roll, like the shadows of lost worlds, away,
When bursts through broken gloom the startled
light ;

Grand are the waves that, like that broken gloom,
Are smitten into splendour by his might ;
And glorious is the storm's tremendous boom,
Although it waileth o'er a watery tomb,
And is a dreadful ode on ocean's drown'd.
Despond not, then; ye plunder'd sons of trade !
Hope's wounded wing shall yet disdain the ground,
And Commerce, while the powers of evil fade,
Shout o'er all seas—' All lands for me were made !'
Hers are the apostles destined to go forth
Upon the wings of mighty winds, and preach
Christ crucified ! To her the south and north
Look through their tempests ; and her lore shall reach
Their farthest ice, if life be there to teach.
Yes, world-reforming Commerce ! one by one
Thou vanquishest earth's tyrants ! and the hour
Cometh when all shall fall before thee—gone
Their splendour, fall'n their trophies, lost their power.
Then o'er th' enfranchised nations wilt thou shower
Like dew-drops from the pinions of the dove,
Plenty and peace ; and never more on thee
Shall bondage wait ; but, as the thoughts of love,
Free shalt thou fly, unchainable and free ;
And men, thenceforth, shall call thee ' Liberty !'

VII.

“Farewell, my friends ! we part, no more to meet
As trampled worms ; but we shall meet again
At God’s right hand, and our Redeemer’s feet !
And oft—how oft !—meantime, your solemn strain
Shall roll from Shirecliffe’s side, o’er vale and plain.
O keep the seventh day holy, wheresoe’er
Ye be, poor sons of toil ! sell not to those
Who sold your freedom, sell not for a sneer
Your day of rest ; but worship God, where glows
The flame-tipp’d spire, or blooms the wild wood-rose.
Hallow this day to gladness ! for, behold,
The spoilers watch to steal your Sabbath too !
Shall seven days’ toil for six days’ bread be sold ?
Forget not yet land-butcher’d Peterloo !
Are ye not bread-tax’d ? What they did they do,
And then most treacherous when they holiest seem,
At your salvation here take deadliest aim.
O trust them not ! but henceforth rightly deem
Of sordid fiends, who murder hope and shame,
And for a bread-tax, wrapp’d the world in flame.
Nor marvel if, athwart the exulting seas,
A steam-highway bring soon to their firesides
War, and its long inflicted miseries,
To plough them with the plough which havoc
 guides,
Despite their wide-wing’d sway o’er winds and tides.

Meantime, like wolves full gorged, they lick their jaws,
And, sick of prey, roll wide their eyes for more ;
But from their black and crime-distended maws
Eject not yet the clotted gold and gore,
‘The price of souls, death-freed on many a shore.’

VIII.

He ceased—but still, while young and old retired,
Beneath th’ autumnal tree, and concave blue,
Stood, like the statue of a man inspired !
And many an eye turn’d fondly back, to view
His face, more saint-like than e’er pencil drew.
Then gush’d his tears. He cast a lingering look
On farthest moors—dear scenes, remember’d well !
And thought of that lone church and verdant nook
Where sleeps his mother, in the Alpine dell.
“ I am alone,” he said—and sigh’d “ Farewell ! ”
Alone—but, oh, not unbeloved thou art !
Nor undeplord, Miles Gordon, shalt thou sleep
In death’s cold arms. Full many a manly heart
Shall weep o’er thee ; the orphan’d five shall weep ;
The mother of the fatherless shall steep
Thy shroud in tears—such tears as mothers shed !
Nor shall the patriot bard refuse to pay
Melodious honours to the patriot dead,
And write above his narrow house of clay,
That all, save righteous deeds, must pass away.

But shall they lay thy bones, O desert-born,
Where no wild bird hears infant rivers flow ?
Oh, not beneath that cloud, which night would scorn,
Not in vile earth, where flowers refuse to grow,
And vanity, in sables, mimics woe ;
Not in yon rank churchyard, where buried lie
Tyrant and slave, polluting still the air ;
But where the rude heath hears the plover cry,
And swings the chainless cloud o'er summits bare ;
There shouldst thou rest—thy heart was ever there !
There shouldst thou rest, beneath the mountain wind,
Far from the pauper's grave, the despot's door ;
Though few would seek thy home, and fewer find
Thy brief inscription on the shadow'd moor :—
“ Here lies the preacher of the plunder'd poor.”



CORN-LAW RHYMES.



To all who revere the Memory of JEREMY BENTHAM, our second LOCKE, and wish to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number for the greatest length of time, I inscribe these "Corn-Law Rhymes."

SONG.

TUNE—" *The Land o' the Leal.*"

WHERE the poor cease to pay,
 Go, loved one, and rest !
 Thou art wearing away
 To the land of the blest.
 Our father is gone
 Where the wrong'd are forgiven,
 And that dearest one,
 Thy husband, in heaven.

No toil in despair,
 No tyrant, no slave,
 No bread-tax is there,
 With a maw like the grave.

But the poacher, thy pride,
 Whelm'd in ocean afar ;
And his brother, who died
 Land-butcher'd in war ;

And their mother, who sank
 Broken-hearted to rest ;
And the baby, that drank
 'Till it froze on her breast ;
With tears, and with smiles,
 Are waiting for thee,
In the beautiful isles
 Where the wrong'd are the free.

Go, loved one, and rest
 Where the poor cease to pay !
To the land of the blest
 Thou art wearing away ;
But the son of thy pain
 Will yet stay with me,
And poor little Jane
 Look sadly like thee.



SONG.

TUNE—" *Robin Adair*."

CHILD, is thy father dead?

Father is gone!

Why did they tax his bread?

God's will be done!

Mother has sold her bed;

Better to die than wed!

Where shall she lay her head?

Home we have none!

Father clamm'd thrice a week—

God's will be done!

Long for work did he seek,

Work he found none.

Tears on his hollow cheek

Told what no tongue could speak:

Why did his master break?

God's will be done!

Doctor said air was best—

Food we had none;

Father, with panting breast,

Groan'd to be gone:

Now he is with the blest—

Mother says death is best!

We have no place of rest—

Yes, ye have one!

THE DEATH FEAST.

THE birth-day, or the wedding-day,
Let happier mourners keep :
To Death my vestal vows I pay,
And try in vain to weep.
Some griefs the strongest soul might shake,
And I such griefs have had ;
My brain is hot—but they mistake
Who deem that I am mad.
My father died—my mother died—
Four orphans poor were we ;
My brother John work'd hard, and tried
To smile on Jane and me.
But work grew scarce, while bread grew dear,
And wages lessen'd too ;
For Irish hordes were bidders here,
Our half-paid work to do.
Yet still he strove, with failing breath
And sinking cheek, to save
Consumptive Jane from early death—
Then join'd her in the grave.
His watery hand in mine I took,
And kiss'd him till he slept ;
Oh, still I see his dying look !
He tried to smile, and wept !

I bought his coffin with my bed,
My gown bought earth and prayer ;
I pawn'd my mother's ring for bread—
I pawn'd my father's chair.
My Bible yet remains to sell,
And yet unsold shall be ;
But language fails my woes to tell—
Even crumbs were scarce with me.
I sold poor Jane's grey linnet then—
It cost a groat a-year ;
I sold John's hen—and miss'd the hen,
When eggs were selling dear :
For autumn nights seem'd wintry cold,
While seldom blazed my fire ;
And eight times eight no more I sold
When eggs were getting higher.
But still I glean the moor and heath ;
I wash, they say, with skill ;
And Workhouse bread ne'er cross'd my teeth—
I trust it never will.
But when the day on which John died
Returns with all its gloom,
I seek kind friends, and beg, with pride,
A banquet for the tomb.
One friend, my brother James, at least,
Comes then with me to dine ;
Let others keep the marriage-feast,
The funeral feast is mine.

For then on them I fondly call,
And then they live again !
To-morrow is our festival
Of Death, and John, and Jane.
E'en now, behold ! they look on me,
Exulting from the skies,
While angels round them weep to see
The tears gush from their eyes !
I cannot weep—why can I not ?
My tears refuse to flow :
My feet are cold—my brain is hot—
Is fever madness ?—No.
Thou smilest, and in scorn—but thou,
Couldst thou forget the dead ?
No common beggar courtesies now,
And begs for burial bread.



ELEGY.

O HUSKISSON ! O Huskisson !
 O Huskisson, in vain our friend !
 Why hast thou left thy work undone ?
 Of good begun is this the end ?
 Thou should'st have lived, if they remain
 Who fetter'd us, and hated thee.
 O Huskisson, our friend in vain !
 Where now are hope and liberty ?
 Thou should'st have lived, if with thee dies
 The poor man's hope of better days.
 Time stops to weep, but yet shall rise
 The sun whose beams shall write thy praise.
 The widow weeps—but what is she,
 And what her paltry common woe ?
 Worlds weep—and *millions* fast for thee.
 Our hope is gone ! why didst thou go ?
 Pleased hell awhile suspends his breath,
 Then shouts in joy, and laughs in hate ;
 And plague and famine call on death
 Their jubilee to celebrate.
 A *shadow* bids improvement stand,
 While faster flow a nation's tears.
 O dead man ! with thy pallid hand,
 Thou rollest back the tide of years !

THE RECORDING ANGEL.

I.

I AM not death, O King ! nor by him sent
O'er thy sad heart my pinions black to wave ;
But, when men die, I stand, in silence bent,
Writing the deeds of warrior, saint, or slave,
And canonize the timid and the brave.
They die, but after them their actions live,
For good or ill. Speak, then, if thou wouldst be,
Though bad, not worst ; and mercy may forgive
The cureless past. What shall I write of *thee* ?
Shall toil be plunder'd still—or trade be free ?
Know'st thou the law by which Kings govern well,
The golden law—"Reign not for some but all ?"
Shall I to men, and to the immortals tell
That thou didst fetter hope, or disenthral ?
O answer, ere the fatal curtain fall !
To-morrow, and the Sultan is forgot
Even in the harem ; but on realms oppress'd
The scar remains, where pass'd the iron hot
With which he sear'd them ; and wrongs unre-
dress'd
Cry to the hopeless dead—"Ye shall not rest !"

Would'st thou be mourn'd with curses or with tears?
As angels mourn the blow that casts aside
The axle of a world, for years and years
Turning the seasons back, and all their pride?
Or as men mourn a godlike friend who died?
Thou hast, men say, for misery's tear a sigh;
But if thy heart is warm, 'tis warm in vain.
King of the Bread-Tax! dearly did'st thou buy
That title. Shall it evermore remain
To mock thy virtues, an eternal stain?

II.

No answer?—Oft the meanest of mankind,
Gay as "The Tenth," and polish'd as their swords,
Have rivall'd Nash in etiquette of mind,
And all the littleness of forms and words;
But thou art King of Squires, and reign'st for
Lords!
To teach thy sire, earth wept a sea of gore;
He lived unteachable, and died untaught
By curses wrung from millions. It is o'er,
And thou wast heir of all his madness wrought;
Be this thy plea—all else availeth nought.
But nations beggar'd, that ye might bequeath
Old bonds to France redeem'd! and Peterloo
Immortal! and Napoleon's deathless death!
These were such deeds as vulgar kings can do;
They made thee famous, but not matchless too.

King of Dear Corn! Time hears, with ceaseless
groan,

Time ever hears, sad names of hate and dread :
But thou, thou only, of all monarchs known,

Didst legislate *against* thy People's bread !

King of the Corn-Laws ! *thus* wilt thou be read !
For ever thus. A monarch calls thee—Go :

And if there be, in other worlds, a throne
That waits a prince unequall'd, be not slow

To seize the vacant seat—it is thine own ;

King of Dear Corn ! thou art “thyself alone !”
Safe is thy fame. 'Tis come, th' unerring hour

That calls even kings to their account away ;
And o'er thee frowns a shadow and a power
To quench the stars, and turn the living day
Black. Yoked below, pant Horror and Dismay ;
The steeds, O King ! with soundless speed, that
drag

Thee, and a king more dreaded than his Lord,
The King of Kings—O Death ! behold his flag—

The wormy shroud ! his sceptre, crown, and
sword—

Worms ! his dread slaves—worms, worms that do
his word !

But where are thine ! *thy* slaves ! *thy* flatterers?—
Gone.

Nor need'st thou sigh for parasite or sage ;
For, lo ! the mightiest of all kings, but one,

(Lord of the dust that once was youth and age,) Attends thee fallen ! Behold his equipage !
How strange a chariot serves both him and thee !
But Death rides royally—no stop, no stay ;
On, on ! far hence thy final home must be.
What cloud swings there ? A world that turns
from day
Her mountains. Death drives well—Away ! Away !
As when to ships, which mists at sea surround,
The dangerous fog assumes a golden hue,
While rocks draw near with sudden breakers bound,
And distant mountains, reeling into view,
Lift o'er the clouds their cliffs of airy blue ;
So, to thy soul, released from mortal ties,
Scenes grand, and wild, and terrible, and new,
Strange lands, strange seas, the stars of unknown
skies—
The realms of death with all their hosts arise.
King of Dear Corn ! the dead have heard that name ;
They come—imperial spectres throng to meet
Him, who, at once, eclipsed their dismal fame.
But why should despots long to kiss thy feet ?
Did Nero starve his People ? No—O shame !
He only hymn'd the flames that, street by street,
Swept Rome, no longer Roman ;—it is meet
That greatness bow to greatest. Famine's lord !
What pallid crowds plebeian round thee rise !
Sent to sad graves by human fiends abhorr'd,

They come to thank thee with their tears and
sighs :—

Nay, shrink not from the crowd of hollow eyes !
Thou know'st their children live to toil and pine,
And that eternity's long roll supplies
No nickname, deathless, grand, and just as thine.

But who is she, of aspect masculine,
Amid the silent moving silently,
With saddest step but not unroyal air,
And gazing like an injured friend on thee ?

There is sublimity in her despair !

O King ! that pitying look is hard to bear !
Thee she forgives, but not the havoc made

By thy meek servants and most gracious foes,
Who sagely interdict, hope, profit, trade.

And must thy name be link'd for aye with those—

“ The triple hundred kinglings ”—who oppose

All change but evil change ; and, deaf and
blind,

Refute the sun and ocean as he flows ?

While daily, hourly, in their war on mind,

They scourge again the Saviour of mankind.

O why didst thou obey them from thy throne ?

Thou might'st have been, alas ! thou would'st
not be

King of the People ! (would that thou had'st known

How almost godlike 'tis to rule the free !)—

Or lived a tyrant ! not the nominee

Of tyrants, wallowing in their victims' woe,
And arm'd to curse mankind, with worse than stings.
Compared with thine, their deeds are night on snow:—
The breath of dungeons on a seraph's wings !
Derision ! who would reign where such are kings?
But to be slave—if thou wert willing slave—
Of mean barbarians ; to be signing clerk
Of palaced almoner, and tax-fed knave ;
To wear their livery, and their badge and mark ;
To love the light, and yet to choose the dark ;—
This, this was vile, and did to millions wrong
Not to be borne by men who boast a spark
Of manly worth. O Tamer of the strong !
Wake thy slow angel, God ! He slumbers long—
His voice of reformation should be heard,
His hand be active, not to overturn,
But to restore ; ere, sick with hope deferr'd,
The good despond ; ere lord and peasant mourn,
Homeless alike ; ere Waste and Havoc spurn,
With hand and foot, the dust of Power and Pride ;
While tower and temple at their bidding burn,
And the land reels, and rocks from side to side,
A sailless wreck, with none to save or guide ;
A sailless wreck, with multitudes to do
Deeds more accursed than pirate's deck e'er saw ;
A helmless wreck, a famine-frantic crew,
All rage and hunger, hand, and voice, and maw ;
And on that rolling wreck, no food, no hope, no law !

THE TREE OF RIVELIN.

THE lightning, like an Arab, cross'd
The moon's dark path on high,
And wild on Rivelin writhed and toss'd
The stars and troubled sky,
Where lone the tree of ages grew,
With branches wide and tall ;
Ah ! who, when such a tempest blew,
Could hear his stormy fall ?
But now the skies, the stars are still,
The blue wave sleeps again,
And heath and moss, by rock and rill,
Are whispering, in disdain,
That Rivelin's side is desolate,
Her giant in the dust !
Beware, O Power ! for God is great,
O Guilt ! for God is just !
And boast not, Pride ! while millions pine,
That wealth secures thy home ;
The storm that shakes all hearths but thine
Is *not* the storm to come.
The tremor of the stars is pale,
The dead clod quakes with fear,
The worm slinks down o'er hill and vale,
When God in wrath draws near.

But if the Upas *will* not bend
Beneath the frown of Heaven,
A *whisper* cometh, which shall rend
What thunder hath not riven.



INSCRIPTION,

FOR A TABLET IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

LAST of a race of giants, lived De Foe,
First champion of commercial liberty !
Where lie his bones ? He died—'tis all we know,
Save that he lived and died in penury ;
And, sorrowing, paid to unrelenting hate
That debt which envy ne'er forgives the great.
Hampden ! De Foe ! Cromwell ! and Milton ! When
Shall twenty years boast four such names again ?—
But which was greatest ? Great was he who fell—
The rebel Hampden ; great and terrible
He who well merited the crown he dared ;
Mighty the novelist ; sublime the bard,
That blind old man of London ! With their deeds
The world still rings as age to age succeeds ;
But which will longest bask in glory's smile ?
The tale of Paradise—or that of Crusoe's isle ?

REFORM.

Too long endured, a power and will,
That would be nought, or first in ill,
Had wasted wealth, and palsied skill,
And fed on toil-worn poverty.

They call'd the poor a rope of sand ;
And, lo ! no rich man's voice or hand
Was raised, throughout the suffering land
Against their long iniquity.

They taught the self-robb'd sons of pride
To turn from toil and want aside,
And coin their hearts, guilt-petrified,
To buy a smile from infamy.

The philter'd lion yawn'd in vain,
While o'er his eyes, and o'er his mane,
They hung a picklock, mask, and chain—
True emblems of his dignity.

They murder'd Hope, they fetter'd Trade ;
The clouds to blood, the sun to shade,
And every good that God had made
They turned to bane and mockery.

Love, plant of Heaven, and sent to show
One bliss divine to earth below,
Changed by their frown, bore crime and woe,
And breathed, for fragrance, pestilence.

With Freedom's plume, and Honour's gem.
They deck'd Abaddon's diadem,
And call'd on hell to shout for them,
The holiest name of holiness.

They knew no interest but their own ;
They shook the State, they shook the Throne,
They shook the world ; and God alone
Seem'd safe in his omnipotence.

Did then his thunder rend the skies,
To bid the dead in soul arise ?—
The dreadful glare of sullen eyes
Alone warn'd cruel tyranny !

A murmur from a trampled worm,
A whisper in the cloudless storm—
Yet these, even these, announced Reform ;
And Famine's scowl was prophecy !

Nor then remorse, nor tardy shame,
Nor love of praise, nor dread of blame,
But tongues of fire, and words of flame,
Roused Mammon from his apathy.

At length, a MAN to Mercia spoke ! *
From smitten hearts the lightning broke ;
The slow invincible awoke ;
And England's frown was victory !

O years of crime ! The great and true—
The nobly wise—are still the few,
Who bid Truth grow where Falsehood grew,
And plant it for eternity !



LINES

WRITTEN IN AN EDITION OF COLLINS, WITH ETCHINGS BY
PLATT.

STRUCK blind in youth, Platt ask'd the proud for
bread ;
He ask'd in vain, and sternly join'd the dead.
I saw him weep—" Hail, holy light !" he cried ;
But living darkness heard him, and he died.
Oh, by the light that left too soon his eyes,
And bade him starve on ice-cold charities ;
Doom'd is the wealth that could no pittance spare,
To save benighted genius from despair !

* Henry Brougham.

'These etchings, Platt, alone remain of thee !
 How soon, alas ! e'en these will cease to be !
 But poesy hath flowers that ever bloom ;
 And music, though she seal'd thy cruel doom,*
 Shall sing a ballad o'er her pupil's tomb.



BATTLE SONG.

DAY, like our souls, is fiercely dark ;
 What then ? 'Tis day !
 We sleep no more ; the cock crows—hark !
 To arms ! away !
 They come ! they come ! the knell is rung
 Of us or them ;
 Wide o'er their march the pomp is flung
 Of gold and gem.
 What collar'd hound of lawless sway,
 To famine dear—
 What pension'd slave of Attila,
 Leads in the rear ?

* The unfortunate artist, having lost his sight, attempted to learn music for subsistence. A concert, which he advertised, failed, and the cup ran over.

Come they from Scythian wilds afar,
Our blood to spill?
Wear they the livery of the Czar?
They do his will.
Nor tassell'd silk, nor epaulette,
Nor plume, nor torse—
No splendour gilds, all sternly met,
Our foot and horse.
But, dark and still, we inly glow,
Condensed in ire!
Strike, tawdry slaves, and ye shall know
Our gloom is fire.
In vain your pomp, ye evil powers,
Insults the land;
Wrongs, vengeance, and *the cause* are ours,
And God's right hand!
Madmen! they trample into snakes
The wormy clod!
Like fire, beneath their feet awakes
The sword of God!
Behind, before, above, below,
They rouse the brave;
Where'er they go, they make a foe,
Or find a grave.



THE REVOLUTION OF 1832.

SEE, the slow Angel writhes in dreams of pain !
 His cheek indignant glows !
 Like Stanedge, shaking thunder from his mane,
 He starts from his repose.
 Wide, wide, his earthquake-voice is felt and heard ;
 “ Arise, ye brave and just ! ”
 The living sea is to its centre stirr'd—
 And, lo ! our foes are dust !
 The earth beneath the feet of millions quakes :
 The whirlwind-cloud is riv'n ;
 As midnight, smitten into lightning, wakes,
 So waked the sword of Heav'n.
 The angel drew not from its sheath that sword :
 He spake, and all was done !
 Night fled away before the Almighty word,
 And, lo !—the sun ! the sun !



THE TRIUMPH OF REFORM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SHEFFIELD POLITICAL UNION.

TUNE—" *Rule Britannia.*"

When woe-worn France first sternly spread
 Her banner'd rainbow on the wind ;
 To smite rebellious Reason dead,
 The kings of many lands combined.
 Did they triumph? So they deem'd :
 Could they triumph? No !—They dream'd.

From Freedom's ashes at their call
 A form of might arose, and blazed :
 'Tis true they saw the phantom fall ;
 'Tis true they crush'd the power they raised ;
 But in conflict with the wise,
 Vain are armies, leagues, and lies.

Not Freedom—no ! but Freedom's foe,
 The baffled league of kings o'erthrew ;
 We conquer'd *them*, though slaves can show
 They conquer'd *us* at Waterloo :
 Mind is mightier than the strong !
 Right hath triumph'd over wrong !

By sordid lusts to ruin led,
Come England's foes, ye self-undone !
Behold for *what* ye taxed our bread !
Is this the *Mont Saint Jean* ye won ?
Hark the *rabble's* triumph lay !—
Sturdy beggars ! who are they ?

Go, call your Czar ! hire all his hordes !
Arm Cæsar Hardinge ! League and plot !
Mind smites you with her wing of words,
And nought shall be, where mind is not.
Crush'd to nothing—what you are—
Wormlings ! will ye prate of war ?

No paltry fray, no bloody day,
That crowns with praise, the baby-great ;
The Deed of Brougham, Russell, Grey,
The Deed that's *done*, we celebrate !
Mind's great Charter ! Europe saved !
Man *for ever* unenslaved !

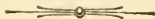
O could the wise, the brave, the just,
Who suffer'd—died—to break our chains ;
Could Muir, could Palmer, from the dust,
Could murder'd Gerald hear our strains ;
Then would martyrs, throned in bliss,
See all ages bless'd in this.

THE PRESS.

WRITTEN FOR THE PRINTERS OF SHEFFIELD, ON THE PASSING
OF THE REFORM BILL.

GOD said—"Let there be light!"
Grim darkness felt his might,
And fled away;
Then startled seas and mountains cold
Shone forth, all bright in blue and gold,
And cried—" 'Tis day! 'tis day!"
"Hail, holy light!" exclaim'd
The thund'rous cloud, that flamed
O'er daisies white;
And, lo! the rose, in crimson dress'd,
Lean'd sweetly on the lily's breast;
And, blushing, murmur'd—"Light!"
Then was the skylark born;
Then rose th' embattled corn;
Then floods of praise
Flow'd o'er the sunny hills of noon;
And then, in stillest night, the moon
Pour'd forth her pensive lays.
Lo, heaven's bright bow is glad!
Lo, trees and flowers all clad
In glory, bloom!

And shall the mortal sons of God
Be senseless as the trodden clod,
 And darker than the tomb?
No, by the *mind* of man!
By the swart artisan!
 By God, our Sire!
Our souls have holy light within,
And every form of grief and sin
 Shall see and feel its fire.
By earth, and hell, and heav'n,
The shroud of souls is riven!
 Mind, mind alone
Is light, and hope, and life, and power!
Earth's deepest night, from this bless'd hour,
 The night of minds is gone!
"The Press!" all lands shall sing;
The Press, the Press we bring,
 All lands to bless:
O pallid Want! O Labour stark!
Behold, we bring the second ark!
 The Press! the Press! the Press!



THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL.

ENGLAND, farewell ! we quit thee—never more
To drink thy dewy light, or hear the thrush
Sing to thy fountain'd vales. Farewell ! thy shore
Sinks—it is gone ! and in our souls the rush
Of billows soundeth, like the crash and crush
Of hope and life. No land ! all sky and sea !
For ever then farewell ! But may we blush
To hear thy language, if thy wrongs or thee
Our hearts forget, where screams o'er rock and tree
The Washingtonian eagle ! In our prayers,
If we forget our wrongers, may we be
Vile as their virtues, hopeless as their heirs,
And sires of sons whom scorn shall nickname
theirs !—

And to such wolves leave we our country ? Oh
The heart that quits thee, e'en in hope, despairs !
Yet from our fathers' graves thy children go
To houseless wilds, where nameless rivers flow,
Lest, when our children pass *our* graves, they hear
The clank of chains, and shrieks of servile woe
From coward bones, that, e'en though lifeless, fear
Cold Rapine's icy fang, cold Havock's dastard spear.

A POET'S PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY Father ! let thy lowly child,
Strong in his love of truth, be wisely bold—
A patriot bard, by sycophants reviled,
Let him live usefully, and not die old !
Let poor men's children, pleased to read his lays,
Love, for his sake, the scenes where he hath been ;
And, when he ends his pilgrimage of days,
Let him be buried where the grass is green ;
Where daisies, blooming earliest, linger late
To hear the bee his busy note prolong—
There let him slumber, and in peace await
The dawning morn, far from the sensual throng,
Who scorn the windflower's blush, the redbreast's
lonely song.



WIN-HILL ;*

OR,

THE CURSE OF GOD.



TO FRANCIS PLACE, Esq., author of "Illustrations of the Principle of Population," I respectfully dedicate this Poem.

THIS day, ye mountains ! is a holiday ;
 Not the bless'd Sabbath, yet a day of rest,
 Though wrung by cant from sordid men, who pay
 Their homage to the god whom cant loves best :
 I hallow it to Heaven, and make it bless'd.
 Wild Moscar Dell, receive me ! headlong Wye,
 Let my soul hear thee from the mountain's breast,
 Telling thy streamlets, as they leap from high,
 That richer, lovelier vales, and nobler hills, are nigh !

Now quit thy home, thou bread-tax'd Artisan !
 Drink air and light, pale victim, while thou may'st !

* The central mountain—not the highest—of the Peak of Derbyshire.

What dost thou hence, umbrella'd Englishman,
Bound to thy pagod in the streeted waste?
Deem'st thou that God dwells only where thou
pray'st?

Come worship here, while clouds the hill-tops kiss!
Death numbereth them who linger where thou
stay'st,

Bliss-praying supplicant! why shunn'st thou bliss?
O can ye hope for heaven, and scorn a scene like
this?

Thy sisters, in the vales left far behind,
Are dead, late-coming Primrose! months ago,
They faded slowly in the pensive wind:
Thou smilest—yes, the happy will do so,
Careless of others' wrongs, and others' woe.
Carnation'd childhood's favourite! thou too here?
Ay, roses die, but daisies always grow.
Skeleton ash! why lag behind the year?
Where Don and Rother meet, no half-clad boughs
appear.

Nor there are children of the young year seen;
But tawdry flowers flaunt where they grew, and tell
How soon they died! even as the base and mean
Laugh o'er a good man's grave. But near the
well
That never fails, the golden pimpernel

Enjoys the freshness of this Alpine clime ;
And violets linger in each deep cool dell,
As lowly virtues of the olden time
Cling to their cottage-homes, and slowly yield to
crime.

Last windflower ! knew'st thou April ? Infant June
Sees thee, and reddens at thy modest smile ;
And o'er thee still May's chaffinch sings his tune,
Well-pleased thy musing idlesse to beguile,
Where two streams meet beneath thy lonely isle ;
And cottony bog-rush, and the antler'd moss,
And the brake's lady* cluster round thee, while
Their heads at thee the rising foxgloves toss,
Where gnarl'd and lichen'd oaks the shadow'd
torrent cross.

So bad men frown ! but can their frowns compel
The cowslip to remain beneath the sod ?
Can they prevent the mosses of the dell
From lifting up their tiny hands to God ?
No ; to the soul these point its far abode,
And humbly tell us what the angels are ;
Immortal flowers ! as dewdrops on the sod
Pure ; or the beams that hymn, from star to star,
The King who paves with suns his wheelless, noise-
less car.

* The Ladysmock, Rousseau's flower.

O thou great Scotsman, with the meteor-pen !
Come from thy Trosachs, Wilson,* come, and paint
Yon monarch of our Alps ! that little men
May feel thy Titan soul in theirs, and faint
Almost with inspiration ; from the taint
Of worldly vileness freed, as by a spell ;
And made, at once, half-prophet and half-saint,
When reading thee to town-sick hearts, they tell
Of scenes few love like thee, and none can paint so
well.

How wildly start the wild flocks as we gaze !
How softly sleeps upon the lap of noon
The cloud-couch'd lightning ! and how sweetly plays
The laughing blue above the blackness ; soon
To melt in fire and horror, where, aboon
This lesser giant's storm-swoll'n floods and firs,
Yon distant giant fronts the mid-day moon,
While solemnly the wind-fed wigan† stirs
Its flapping leaves alone, o'er fern and sun-bright furze !

To bathe with married waves their monarch's feet,
See, where the Ashop and the Derwent haste ;
And how he rears him from the vale, complete
In all his time-touch'd majesty, embraced
By the blue, bright blue heavens ; his proud brow
graced

* The author of "The City of the Plague."

† The Mountain-ash.

With that stone diadem which Nature made,
Ages before her practised hand had graced
With living gems the bluebell-haunted shade ;
Or, high in lucid air, her wind-swift wings display'd !

King of the Peak ! Win-Hill ! thou, throned and
crown'd,
That reign'st o'er many a stream and many a vale !
Star-loved, and meteor-sought, and tempest-found !
Proud centre of a mountain-circle, hail !
The might of man may triumph or may fail ;
But, Eldest Brother of the Air and Light,
Firm shalt thou stand when demigods turn pale !
For thou, ere Science dawn'd on Reason's night,
Wast, and wilt be when Mind shall rule all other might.

To be a crown'd and sceptred curse, that makes
Immortals worms ! a wolf, that feeds on souls !
One of the names which vengeance whips with
snakes,
Whose vemon cannot die ! a king of ghouls,
Whose drink is blood ! To be clear-eyed as owls,
Still calling darkness light, and winter spring !
To be a tiger-king, whose mercy growls !
To be of meanest things the vilest thing !
Throned asp o'er lesser asps ! What grub would be a
king ?

But, crown'd Win-Hill ! to be a king like thee !
Older than death ! as God's thy calm behest !
Only heaven-rivall'd in thy royalty !
Calling the feeble to thy sheltering breast,
And shaking beauty from thy gorgeous vest,
And loved by every good and happy thing !
With nought beneath thee that thou hast not
 bless'd,
And nought above thee but the Almighty's wing !
O glorious god-like aim ! Who would not be a king ?

But, lo, the Inn ! the mountain-girded Inn !
Whose amber stream is worth all Helicon !
To pass it fasting were a shame and sin ;
Stop ! for the gate hangs well that hinders none ;
Refresh, and pay, then stoutly travel on !
Ay, thou hast need to pree the barley-wine ;
Steep is th' ascent, O bard ! thou look'st upon ;
To reach that cloud-capt seat, and throne divine,
Might try a stronger frame and younger limbs than
 thine.

Now, having drunk of jolly ale enough,
To climb Win-Hill is worth ambition—yea !
Ambition, e'en if made of jolly stuff,
Should drink strong ale, or never will he say
To rival climbers—"Follow on my way !"

Old ale and jolly, be it dark or pale,
 Drink like a toper, be thou green or grey !
 Drink oft and long, or try to climb, and fail !
 If thou would'st climb Win-Hill, drink old and jolly
 ale !*

“ Blow, blow, thou breeze of mountain freshness,
 blow !”

Stronger and fresher still, as we ascend
 Strengthen'd and freshen'd, till the land below
 Lies like a map !—On ! on ! those clouds portend
 Hail, rain, and fire ! — Hark, how the rivers
 send
 Their skyward voices hither, and their words
 Of liquid music !—See, how bluely blend
 The east moors with the sky !—The lowing herds,
 To us, are silent now, and hush'd the songful
 birds.

This spot is hallow'd ; sacred are these rocks,
 To death and sorrow. Here, amid the snow,
 A stranger died,† where seldom the wild flocks
 Ascend to feed. Clouds ! for ye only know
 His griefs and wrongs, tell me his name of woe,

* See our old song—“ Back and Sides go Bare.”

† A few years ago, a human skeleton was found near the summit of this mountain, and removed to the churchyard of the village of Hope, where it remains, uncoffined and uninterred.—*Hallamshire and Derbyshire Magazine*.

The mutter'd history of his broken heart ;
That of a thing so noble we may owe
To you a relic, never to depart—
A tale o'er which proud men may sometimes pause
and start !

From the hard world that scorn'd to scorn him, he
Retired, to die in solitude, as dies
The royal eagle in his majesty,
Where no mean bird may peck his fading eyes ;
And told the mournful winds, with tears and sighs,
That so fall'n man should ever die, alone
And undegraded. O'er his cheek the skies,
Stooping in pity, wept to hear him groan,
And drown'd in faithful tears his soul's last low-
breathed moan.

Nor other tears for him were ever shed,
Except by her who, dying, to her breast
Clasp'd him, her child, and mourn'd his father dead ;
And kiss'd and kiss'd that babe, and bless'd and
bless'd
The orphan'd worm that suck'd her into rest ;
And still, almost with hope her grief beguiled,
And tried to pray, till death her eyeballs press'd—
But could not pray, amid her ravings wild,
That God would take the life she gave to that poor
child ?

He died ; but still the winds that loved him came
And whisper'd, though he made them no reply ;
And still his friends, the clouds, bedew'd his frame
With frozen tears, less cold than charity.
But little men, whom summer brought to see
The heathcock's plumes, beheld him where he lay,
And robb'd him of that glorious tomb, which he
Chose in his pride ; bearing his bones away—
His proud, insulted bones—to mix with common clay.

And I will *not* loathe man—although he be
Adder and tiger !—for his sake who died
Here, in his desolation great and free,
And with a fall'n immortal's might and pride,
On human nature's dignity relied,
When all else failed. No workhouse menial's blows
Check'd his last sob ! No packthread-mockery
tied
His sunken chin ! Oh, sick of mortal woes,
I bless the pillow which his Hampden-spirit chose !

High on the topmost jewel of thy crown,
Win-Hill ! I sit bareheaded, ankle-deep
In tufts of rose-cupp'd bilberries ; and look down
On towns that smoke below, and homes that
creep
Into the silvery clouds, which far-off keep

Their sultry state ! and many a mountain stream,
And many a mountain vale, “and ridgy steep ;”
The Peak, and all his mountains, where they gleam
Or frown, remote or near, more distant than they
seem !

There flows the Ashop, yonder bounds the Wye,
And Derwent here towards princely Chatsworth
trends ;

But, while the Nough steals purple from the sky,
Lo ! northward far, what giant’s shadow bends ?
A voice of torrents, hark ! its wailing sends ;
Who drives yon tortured cloud through stone-still
air ?

A rush ! a roar ! a wing ! a whirlwind rends
The stooping larch ! The moorlands cry “ Prepare !
It comes ! ye gore-gorged foes of want and toil,
beware ! ”

It comes ! Behold !—Black Blakelow hoists on high
His signals to the blast from Gledhill’s brow.
Them, slowly glooming on the lessening sky,
The bread-tax’d exile sees, (in speechless woe,
Wandering the melancholy main below,
Where round the shores of Man the dark surge
heaves,)
And while his children’s tears in silence flow,
Thinks of sweet scenes to which his soul still cleaves,
That home on Etherow’s side, which he for ever leaves.

Now expectation listens, mute and pale,
While, ridged with sudden foam, the Derwent
 brawls ;
Arrow-like comes the rain, like fire the hail ;
And, hark ! Mam-Tor on shuddering Stanage calls !
See, what a frown o'er castled Winnat falls !
Down drops the death-black sky ! and Kinderscout,
Conscious of glory, laughs at intervals ;
Then lifts his helmet, throws his thunders out,
Bathes all the hills in flame, and hails their stormy
 shout.

Hark ! how my Titan guards laugh kings to scorn !
See, what a fiery circle girds my state !
Hail mountains ! River-Gatherers ! Eldest born
Of Time and Nature, dreadful, dark, and great !
Whose tempests, wing'd from brows that threaten
 fate,
Cast shadows, blacken'd with intensest light,
Like the despair of angels fallen, that wait
On God's long-sleeping wrath, till roof'd with night.
The seas shall burn like oil, and Death be waked with
 fright.

Storm ! could I ride on thee, and grasp thy mane,
A bitless bridle, in my unburnt hand ;
Like flax consumed, should fall the bondman's chain.
Like dust, the torturers of each troubled land ;
And Poland o'er the prostrate Hun should stand—

Her foot upon his neck, her falchion's hilt
Beneath her ample palm. Then every strand
Should hear her voice : " Our bulwark is rebuilt,
Europe ! but who shall gauge the blood these but-
chers spilt ? "

And what are they, O land of age-long woes !
Who laid the hope of thy redemption low ?
Are they not Britain's sons, and Labour's foes,
Who, sowing curses, ask why curses grow,
And league with fate for their own overthrow ?
When will their journey end ? They travel fast !—
Slow Retribution ! wherefore art thou slow ?
When will the night of our despair be past ?
And bread-tax'd slaves become Men, godlike Men, at
last ?

Thy voice is like thy Father's, dreadful storm !
Earth hears his whisper, when thy clouds are torn ;
And Nature's tremor bids our sister-worm
Sink in the ground. But they who laugh to scorn
The trampled heart which want and toil have
worn,
Fear thee, and laugh at HIM, whose warning word
Speaks from thy clouds, on burning billows borne ;
For, in their hearts, his voice they never heard.
Ne'er felt his chastening hand, nor pined with hope
deferr'd.

O Thou whose whispering is the thunder ! Power
Eternal, world-attended, yet alone !
O give, at least, to labour's hopeless hour
That peace, which Thou deny'st not to a stone !
The famine-smitten millions cease to groan ;
When wilt Thou hear their mute and long despair ?
Lord, help the poor ! for they are all thy own.
Wilt Thou not help ? did I not hear Thee swear
That Thou would'st tame the proud, and grant their
victims' prayer ?

Methought I saw THEE in the dreams of sleep.
This mountain, Father, groan'd beneath thy heel !
Thy other foot was placed on Kinder's steep ;
Before thy face I saw the planets reel,
While earth and skies shone bright as molten steel ;
For under all the stars Thou took'st thy stand,
And bad'st the ends of heaven behold and feel,
That Thou to all thy worlds had'st stretch'd thine
hand,
And cursed for evermore the Legion-Fiend of Land !

“ He is accursèd ! ” said the sons of light,
As in their bowers of bliss they listen'd pale ;
“ He is accursèd ! ” said the comets, bright
With joy ; and star to star a song of bale
Sang, and sun told to sun the dismal tale,

“ He is accursèd ! till the light shall fade
To horror in heaven’s courts, and glory veil
Her beams, before the face of Truth betray’d ;
Because he cursed the land, which God a blessing
made !

“ He is accursèd !” said the Prince of Hell ;
And—like a Phidian statue, mountain-vast—
Stooping from rocks, black, yet unquenchable,
The pale shade of his faded glory cast
Over the blackness of black fire, aghast—
Black-burning seas, that ever black will burn :
“ He is accursèd ! and while hell shall last,
Him and his prayer heaven’s marble roof will spurn.
Who cursed the blessèd sod, and bade earth’s millions
mourn !” *

* It was a maxim of the Roman law, that whoever made his property a nuisance, should cease to be a man of property ; and this maxim was but a commentary on the unwritten law of God—unwritten, or with the pen of desolation written over the face of fallen empires. When the patricians of Rome destroyed the Licinian Law, and monopolized the soil, did not their heads then ever-after fall like poppies ?

END OF VOL. I.

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OF
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